

HEARTS OF GRACE



By

PHILIP VERRILL
MIGHELS

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Hearts of Grace

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GARDE APPEARED LIKE THE VERY SPIRIT OF THE FOREST

Page 78

HEARTS *of* GRACE

BY

PHILIP VERRILL MIGHELS

AUTHOR OF

"The Furnace of Gold," "Thurley Ruxton,"
and "As It Was in the Beginning"



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HEARTS OF GRACE

BY DESMOND FITZGERALD

Author of "The Heart of the Matter," "The Heart of the Sea," "The Heart of the Land," "The Heart of the Sky," "The Heart of the Earth," "The Heart of the Sun," "The Heart of the Moon," "The Heart of the Stars," "The Heart of the Universe."

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AUTHOR'S NOTE.

SEVERAL years ago there was published anonymously "When a Witch Is Young."

This is a revision of the same story.

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Hearts of Grace

HEARTS OF GRACE

PART I.

CHAPTER I.

LE ROI EST MORT.

THE first, the last—the only King the Americans ever had, was dead. King Philip, the mighty Sachem of the Wampanoag Indians, had been slain. His warriors were slaughtered or scattered. The war was ended.

It was the 13th day of August, in the year 1676. The seemly town of Plymouth was in an uproar. The human emotions of the Puritan people of Massachusetts had tugged at the shackles of a long restraint and had broken them asunder. Men, women and children, they surged through the streets, acclaiming a buff-colored army that filled the thoroughfares like a turgid flood. They were the forces which Captain Benjamin Church had led to the camp of King Philip, in the swamps of Mount Hope and Pocasset, where the final scene of the gory drama had been enacted.

Armed with clanking swords, shouldered carbines, and with great pistols flopping at the waist, rode a troop of sixty horsemen, caparisoned in glittering

back, breast and head pieces. Behind them tramped a long column of foot-soldiers; brown Puritans—stern, mirth-denying, lusty at fighting. Above their heads swayed a thin forest of pikestaves, the sunbeams glinting from their steel tips. There was clinking of metal on metal, thud and clatter of hoofs and feet upon the paved streets, rattle of arms; and, above all, the shouts of the townsmen mingled with the shrill treble of gabbling women and children.

At the forefront of this motley procession, like a mockery of a drum-major, heading a march of doom, walked an Indian ally. At intervals he leaped, and contorted his body weirdly, for the purpose of the better calling to the attention of the rabble the ghastly proof of victory that he bore—the head of the great King Philip.

Racing, crowding, surging, the townsfolk made no secret of their ghoulish delight in beholding this gory object. Love, anger, joy, hate—the daily emotions of mankind the world over—were so habitually repressed by these serious people that, as a vent to their pent-up natures, they seemed to give themselves wholly to an orgy of gasping, shuddering, and unholy gloating. They laughed, they skipped on nimble feet, they sang praises hysterically to the God who had delivered their enemy into their hands. In the frenzy that had swept like a fire through the chaff of their shriveled emotions, all bonds of deportment loosened, and the young men and women seized the occasion to look unbridled feelings into one another's eyes.

About the extreme rear of the procession another crowd had gathered. The people hooted, pushed,

craned their necks, and raced to keep pace with the steady, long strides of the soldiers. Interest centered upon two captives, marching together between the ranks of a loosely-formed guard of pike-men. One was a mere boy, white as any in the multitude, and paler than the palest. The other was an Indian; noble of feature and dignified in his bearing. He was old Annawon, the last of King Philip's councilors; who, having surrendered under promise of "good quarter," was even now being led to his death.

The greater attraction, however, seemed to be the boy. Tall and lithe he was, though his age could scarcely be a whit above fourteen. Though white, he was dressed as an Indian, and bore himself like a sullen brave. Through the stoicism, which he labored to hold as a mask upon his face, the signs of anguish played, as a strong under-current betrays itself from beneath the surface of still waters. In all the multitude he had but a single friend—the Red-man with whom he was marching. He gazed stolidly at the crowding, pitiless faces. Near him a score of nimble boys were running, a frantic desire to strike him showing in their eyes. Then, into the press behind these vicious urchins, towering head high over the human tide, a man strode. Perched upon his shoulder, safe from the crush and jostling of the rabble, he bore a little Puritan maiden, whose brown eyes rested upon the boy captive with an expression of tenderest compassion. She clung to her huge protector with a tense little fist, while her other hand was pressed upon her cheek till all about each tiny finger was white, in the bonny apple-blush of her color. It seemed as though

she must cry her sympathy aloud to the young prisoner. The boy raised his eyes, and saw the look. Sweet as a gleam of God's sunshine in the darkness of a dungeon; grateful as a cool spring in a burning desert; seemed the little flower face, moving above the shifting masks of brutality and hate. With his eyes upon it, he strode more manfully along.

The boy was still gazing back his answer to the child, when an urchin, bolder than his fellows, hurled a stone that struck him smartly in the side. With a panther-like motion he turned, and breaking through his loosely-formed escort, hurled himself upon his assailant and bore him to the ground. And then, above the tumult which arose, came the voice of the old councilor, Annawon, who was marching to his death. It was a soft, quick word, in the Indian tongue, but it sufficed. The lad in buckskin released his overthrown antagonist, and darted back to his place in the ranks. His eyes blinked swiftly, but in vain, for tears of rage and pain forced their way between his eyelids, and made dark furrows adown his dusty cheeks. Angrily he wiped them away upon his sleeve. When he looked once more at the place where the little Puritan girl had smiled from the big man's shoulder, she was gone.

Foot-soldiers closed in about their dangerous charge. The bawling youths of Plymouth seemed to multiply, as though by magic. But their opportunities for committing further mischief were past, for the pageant was passing the gray jail building; and the escort, wedging their way through the press of people, forced him towards the gloomy entrance. Again, above

the clamor, there rose a voice, and in the Indian tongue the young captive heard the words:

“Farewell, Little-Standing-Panther.”

It was old Annawon, who had divined that there would be no other parting with the lad who was the only creature which the war had left for him to love.

“Farewell,” and again: “Farewell,” cried the boy. And the grim gates of the prison-house clanged shut behind him.

* * * * *

Night closed down—night the beneficent, that shrouds the evidences of mankind’s barbarities. Long since, the people, at the request of Governor Winslow, had dispersed to their several homes. The head of the butchered King Philip had been impaled upon a stake, and planted on the public square. The moon arose, casting a pale, cold light, and a passionless calm brooded upon the sleeping village.

At length, with a tread as silent as that of death itself, an active figure crept from shadow to shadow, adown the streets which the night had silver-plated, till it came to the square where was planted the stake with the moon-softened head upon it. The lone visitor was the white boy-captive, still dressed in his Indian toggery. He had eluded the tired jail guards.

He espied that which he sought, and came forward slowly; then halted, and extended his arms towards the stake with its motionless burden. Again he advanced reverently, murmuring brokenly in the Indian tongue:

“Metacomet—Metacomet—, my foster father,—I have come.”

CHAPTER II.

A FRIENDSHIP OF CHANCE.

THROUGH the gray mist of Plymouth's dawn there came a sound of footsteps, and then a murmur of melodious humming, somewhat controlled and yet too sturdy and joyous to be readily accounted for in the strict Puritan village. Presently, looming out of the uncertain light, appeared the roughly-hewn figure of a young man of five and twenty. He was singing to himself, as he hastened with big strides through the deserted streets.

On the point of passing the place where the gibbeted head of King Philip made a rude exclamation point in the calm of gray Plymouth, the early riser suddenly noted the curled-up form of a human being on the ground, one arm loosely bent about the iron stake, his head resting against it, and his eyes fast closed in the sleep of exhaustion. The man started slightly, halted and ceased his singing.

He blinked, shifted his feet uneasily and rubbed stoutly at his jaw, as he gazed in perplexity at the picture before him. He then tiptoed as if to go on, quietly, about his own business. He glanced at the head, then back to the boy, from whose lips, in his sleep, a little moan escaped. The visitor noted the traces where tears had channeled down

the lad's pale cheeks. There was something unescapable in the attitude of the bare golden head against the stake. The man stopped and laid his big hand gently on the half-curved locks.

Instantly the boy awoke, leaped to his feet and fell down again, from sheer stiffness, staring at the man with eyes somewhat wild. He arose again at once, more steadily, overcoming the cramps in his muscles doggedly, never ceasing for a second to watch the man who had waked him.

"I give you good morrow," said the man. "It seems to me you have need of a friend, since you have clearly lost one that you much esteemed."

There was persuasion and honesty in the stranger's warm-blue eyes, good nature in his broad, smooth face and a large capacity for affection denoted in his somewhat sensuous mouth. Such a look of friendship and utter sincerity as he bestowed on the startled and defiant boy before him could not have been easily counterfeited. The youthful know sincerity by intuition.

"Who are you?" said the boy, his voice hoarse and weakened. "What would anybody want with me?"

"My name is William Phipps," said the stranger, simply. "I am a ship-builder of Boston. If you have no better friend, perhaps I would do till you can find one. I am on my way to Boston now. If you need a friend and would like to leave Plymouth, you may come with me, unless you feel you cannot trust any one about this village." He paused a moment and then added, "I think you must be the boy I heard of, Adam Rust, brought in with the captured Indians."

"My name is Adam Rust," the boy admitted. "I

have no friends left. If you have been helping to kill the Wampanoags I would rather not try to be your friend. But I know I would like you and I should be glad to go to Boston, or any place away from here." In the daylight he could not bear to look up at the head above him.

"I have been too busy to fight," said William Phipps, employing the same excuse he had used for friends with recruiting proclivities. "And I have been too happy," he added, as if involuntarily. "So, you see, there is no reason why I should not be your friend. Have you had any breakfast?" He put out his hand to shake.

"No," said Adam. He lost his hand in the big fist which Phipps presented, and restrained himself from crying by making a mighty effort. He had gone without eating for two days, but he said nothing about it.

"Then," said Phipps heartily, "the sooner we start the better. We can get something hot on the brig."

He began his long striding again. Adam hesitated a moment. He looked up at the features above him, his heart gushing full of emotion.

Some inarticulate farewell, in the Indian tongue, he breathed through his quivering lips. His eyes grew dimmed. He fancied he saw a smile of farewell and of encouragement play intangibly on those still, saddened lineaments, and so he held forth his arms for a second and then turned away to join his new-found protector.

William Phipps, having thought the boy to be following more closely than he was, stopped to let him catch up. Thus he noted the look of anguish with which the lad was leaving that grim remnant of King Philip behind. Phipps was one of Nature's "motherly men"

—hardly ever more numerous than rocs' eggs on the earth. He felt his heart go forth to Adam Rust. Therefore it was that he looked down in the boy's face, time after time, as they walked along together. Thus they came to the water-front and wharves, at the end of one of which the brig "Captain Spencer" was swinging.

"This ship belongs to me and I made her," said Phipps, with candid pride in his achievement. "You shall see that she sails right merrily."

They went aboard. A few sailors scrubbing down the deck, barefooted and with sleeves at elbow, now abandoned their task temporarily, at the command of the mate, who had seen his captain coming, to hoist sail and let go the hawsers. The chuckle in the blocks, as the sailors heaved and hauled at the ropes, gave Adam Rust a pleasure he had never before experienced.

Breakfast being not yet prepared for service, Phipps conducted his foundling about the craft for a look at her beauties. When Adam had patted the muzzle of the brig's gun and felt the weight of a naked sword in his fist, in the armory, the buoyancy of his youth put new color in his cheeks and a sparkle in his eyes. He was a bright-natured, companionable lad, who grew friendly and smiled his way into one's affections rapidly, but naturally. When he and Phipps had come up again to the deck, after breakfast, they felt as if they had always been friends.

The brig was under way. Shorewards the gray old Atlantic was wrinkled under the fretful annoyance of a brisk, salty breeze. The ship was slipping prettily up the coast, with stately courtesies to the stern rocks that stood like guardians to the land.

“I think we shall find you were born for a sailor, Adam,” said the master of the craft. “I can give you my word it is more joy and life to sail a ship than to make one. And some day——” but he halted. The modest boasts, with which he warmed the heart of his well beloved wife, were a bit too sacred for repetition, even to a boy so winning. “But,” he concluded, “perhaps you would like to tell me something of yourself.”

Thus encouraged Adam related his story. He was the son of John Rust, a chivalrous gentleman, an affectionate husband and a serious man, with a light heart and a ready wit. John Rust had been the friend of the Indians and the mediator between them and the whites until the sheer perfidy of the Puritans had rendered him hopeless of retaining the confidence of the Red-men, when he had abandoned the office. Adam’s mother had been dead for something more than four years. Afflicted by his sense of loss, John Rust had become a strange man, a restless soul hopelessly searching for that other self, as knights of old once sought the holy grail.

He went forth alone into the trackless wilderness that led endlessly into the west. Although the father and son had been knit together in their affections by long talks, long ranges together in the forests and by the lessons which the man had imparted, yet when John Rust had gone on his unearthly quest, he could not bear the thought of taking young Adam with him into the wilds.

He had therefore left the boy with his friends, the lad’s natural guardians, the honorable nation of Wampanoags. “Keep him here, teach him of your wisdom,

make him one of your young warriors," he had said when he went, "so that when I return I may know him for his worth."

King Philip, the mighty Sachem of the tribe, had thereafter been as a foster-father to the boy. For more than two years the Red-man had believed John Rust to have found his final lodge, and this was the truth. And perhaps he had also found his holy grail. He perished alone in the trackless forest. Adam had learned his wood-lore of his red brothers. He was stout, lithe, wiry and nimble. He rode a horse like the torso of a centaur. He was a bit of a boaster, in a frank and healthy way.

King Philip's war, ascribed, as to causes, to "the passion of the English for territory; their confidence that God had opened up America for their exclusive occupancy; their contempt for the Indians and their utter disregard for their rights," had come inexorably upon the Wampanoags. In its vortex of action, movement, success and failure at last for the Indians, Adam Rust had been whirled along with Metacomet. He had never been permitted by King Philip to fight against his "white brothers," but he had assisted to plan for the safety of the old men, women and children, in procuring game and in constructing shelters. He had learned to love these silently suffering people with all his heart. The fights, the hardships, the doom, coming inevitably upon the hopeless Wampanoags, had made the boy a man, in some of the innermost recesses of a heart's suffering. He had seen the last sad remnants of the Wampanoags, the Pocassets and the Narragansetts scatter, to perish in the dismal swamps. He had wit-

nessed the death of King Philip, brought upon him by a treacherous fellow Red-man. And then he had marched in that grim procession.

Adam made no attempt to convey an idea of the magnitude of his loss. It would not have been possible. There is something in human nature which can never be convinced that death has utterly stilled a beloved voice and quenched the fire of the soul showing through a pair of eyes endeared by companionship. This in Adam made him feel, even as he told his tale to William Phipps, that he was somehow deserting his faithful friends.

Bareheaded on the sun-lit deck as he told his story, lithe in his gestures, splendidly scornful when he imitated the great chieftains of the tribes, and then like a young Viking as at last he finished his narrative and looked far and wide on the sparkling sea, in joyousness at the newer chapter which seemed to open to the very horizons themselves before him, Adam awakened the lusty youth and daring in William Phipps and the dreams of a world's career always present in his brain.

The man's eyes sparkled, as he spun the wheel that guided the brig, bounding beneath their feet. A restlessness seized upon the spirit in his breast.

"Adam," he said, "do you like this ship?"

"Yes!—oh, it makes me feel like shouting!" the boy exclaimed. "I wish I could straddle it, like a horse, and make it go faster and wilder, 'way off there—and everywhere! Oh, don't it make you breathe!"

"Then," said Phipps, repressing his own love of such a madness as Adam had voiced, "let us go for a long sail together. I have long had in mind a voyage for trad-

ing to Hispaniola. If you would like to go with me, I will get the brig ready in a week."

For his answer young Adam leaped as if he would spur the ship in the ribs and ride her to the end of the earth forthwith.

CHAPTER III.

THE GERM OF A PASSION.

A BONNIE little Puritan maid, Mistress Garde Merrill, stood in the open doorway at her home, fervently hugging her kitten. The sunlight seemed almost like beaten gold, so tangibly did it lay upon the house, the vines that climbed the wall, and the garden full of old-fashioned flowers.

A few leaves, which had escaped from the trees, in a longing to extend their field of romping, were being whirled about in a brisk zephyr that spun in a corner. A sense of warmth and fragrance made all the world seem wantoning in its own loveliness.

Little Garde, watching the frolic of the leaves, and thinking them pretty elves and fairies, dancing, presently looked up into the solemn visage of a passing citizen, who had paused at the gate.

"Mistress Merrill," he said, gravely, after a moment's inspection of the bright, enchanting little face, "your eyes have not the Puritan spirit of meekness." Thereupon he departed on his way, sadly shaking his head.

Garde's eyes, in all truth, were dancing right joyously; and dancing was not accounted a Puritan devotion. Such brown, light-ensnaring eyes could not,

however, constrain themselves to melancholy. No more could the apple-red of her smooth, round cheeks retreat from the ardor of the sun. As for her hair, like strands on strands of spun mahogany, no power on earth could have disentangled its nets wherein the rays of golden light had meshed and intermeshed themselves. In her brightness of color, with her black and white kitten on her arm, the child was a dainty little human jewel.

She was watching a bee and a butterfly when a shadow fell again into the yard, among the flowers, at the entrance. Garde felt her attention drawn and centered at once. She found herself looking not so much at a bareheaded boy, as fairly into the depths of his very blue and steadfast eyes.

The visitor stood there with his hands clasping two of the pickets of which the gate was fashioned. He had seen everything in the garden at one glance, but he was looking at Garde. His eyes began laughingly, then seriously, but always frankly, to ask a favor.

"I prithee come in," said Garde, as one a little struck with wonder.

The boy came in. Garde met him in the path and gave him her kitten. He took it, apparently because she gave it, and not because he was inordinately fond of cats. It seemed to Garde that she knew this boy, and yet he had on a suit that suggested a young sailor, and she had never made the acquaintance of any sailors whatsoever. If he would only look elsewhere than at her face, she thought, perhaps she could remember.

"See them," she said, and she pointed to where the leaves were once more capering in the corner.

The boy looked, but his gaze would swing back to its North, which it found in two brown eyes.

"I saw you that day in Plymouth," he said. "And I got out of their old jail, and I didn't see anybody else that looked kind or nice among all those people."

"Oh!" said Garde, suddenly remembering everything, "oh, you were—that boy marching with the old Indian. I was so sorry. And I am so glad that you got away. I am glad you came to see me. Grandfather and I were down there for a visit—so I saw you. Oh dear me!" She looked at her young visitor with eyes open wide by amazement. It seemed almost too much to believe that the very boy she had seen and so pitied and liked, in that terrible procession at Plymouth, should actually be standing here before her in her grandfather's garden! "Oh dear me!" she presently said again.

"I hate Plymouth!" said the boy, "but I like Boston."

"I am so glad," said Garde. "Will you tell me your name? Mine is Garde Merrill."

The boy said: "My name is Adam Rust."

"I was named for all my aunts," the maid imparted, as if eager to set a troublesome matter straight at once, "Gertrude, Abigail, Rosella, Dorothy and Elizabeth. The first letters of their names spell G-A-R-D-E, Garde."

Her visitor was rendered speechless for a moment. "Metacomet and all the Indians used to call me Little-Standing-Panther," he then said, boyishly, not to be outdone in the matter of names.

"Metacomet—King Philip? Oh, then you are the

boy that used to live with the Indians, and that was how they got you !” gasped the little maid. “Grandfather told auntie all about it. Oh, I wish I could live with the Indians ! I am very, very sorry they got you !” But I am glad you came to see me.”

Adam flushed with innocent and modest pride, thus to impress his small admirer, who was named so formidably. He thought that nothing so pleasant had ever happened in all his life.

“It is too sad to live with Indians,” he answered. A mist seemed to obscure the light in his eyes and to cast a shadow between them and the sweet face at which he was looking with frank admiration. The cloud passed, however, as clouds will in the summer, and his gaze was again one of illuminated smiles. “I am a sailor now,” he said, with a little boast in his voice. “To-morrow morning we are going to start for Hispaniola.”

“Oh dear me !” said Garde, in sheer despair of an adequate expression of her many emotions. Then she added contritely : “I mustn’t say ‘Oh dear me !’ but —oh dear—I wish I might.”

“I shan’t mind,” said Adam.

“I wish I could go to Hispaniola, too,” said Garde, honestly. “I hate to be kept here as quiet as a clock that doesn’t go. I suppose you couldn’t take me ? Let’s sit down with the kitten and think it over together.”

“I don’t think we could take any girls,” said Adam, seating himself at her side on the porch, “but I could bring you back something when I come.”

“Oh, let’s talk all about what we would rather have most,” Garde responded.

So their fingers mingled in the fur of the kitten and they talked of fabulous things with which the West Indies were reported to abound. His golden hair, and her hair so darkly red, made the picture in the sunlight a thing complete in its brightness and beauty. The wind floated a few stray filaments, richly red as mahogany, from the masses on Garde's pretty brow, across to the ringlets on Adam's temple. To and fro, over these delicate copper wires, stretched for its purpose, the sweet love that comes first to a lad and a maid, danced with electrical activity.

"If you are going to-morrow," said Garde, "you must see all the flowers and everything now." She therefore took him by the hand and led him about the garden, first she, then he, and then she once more carrying the kitten.

They were still in the midst of their explorations of the garden, which required that each part should be visited several times, when the gate opened and in walked Garde's tall, stern-looking grandfather.

David Donner rubbed his eyes in amazement, hardly believing that his senses could actually be recording a picture of his granddaughter, hand in hand with some utter stranger of a boy, in his own precincts. He came quickly toward the pair, making a sound that came within an ell of being a shout.

Garde looked up in sudden affright. Adam regarded the visitor calmly and without emotion. Having first dropped the young sailor's hand, Garde now resolutely screwed her little warm fingers back into the boy's fist.

"Grandfather," she said boldly, "I shall sail to-morrow for Hispaniola."

David Donner, at this, was so suddenly filled with steam pressure, which he felt constrained to repress, that his eyes nearly popped out of their sockets.

"Go away, boy," he said to Adam. "Mistress Merrill, your conduct is quite uncalled for."

Having divined that his sister had deserted her post and gone, as was her wont, to the nearest neighbor's, for a snack of gossip, he glared at Adam, swooped down upon Garde and caught her up in his arms abruptly, kitten and all.

Her hold on Adam's hand being rudely wrenched asunder, Garde felt her heart break incontinently. She began to weep without restraint, in fact, furiously. She also kicked, and was also deporting herself when the door was slammed behind the forms of herself, her kitten and her grandfather, a moment later.

Adam looked once where she had gone. His face had assumed a stolidity which he was far from feeling. He walked to the gate and went away, without once turning to look back at the house.

Mistress Garde, confronted by David Donner at close quarters, soon regained her maidenly composure and wept surreptitiously on the stomach of the kitten. At length she looked up in defiance at the silent old man.

"I have changed the name of my kitten," she said. "His name is Little-Standing-Panther!"

Her grandfather, to whom this outbreak seemed something of an indication of mental disorder, on her part, stared at the child dumbly. Not without some justification for her deductions, Garde thought him quelled. In a spirit of reckless defiance, and likewise to give some vent to her feelings, she suddenly threw

her arms about the bedewed kitten, on its pillow, pressed her face against its fur and said to it, fervently:

“Little-Standing-Panther, I love you, and love you and love you!”

Grandfather Donner looked up in alarm. “Tut, tut, my child,” said he, “love is a passion.”

PART II.

CHAPTER I.

A ROVER AND HIS RETINUE.

His only gold was in his hair ;
He had no silver hoard ;
But steel he had, enow to spare—
In his thews and in his sword !

TOWARD the close of a glorious day in September, 1683, William Phipps beheld a smart brig nose her way up the harbor of Boston, and drop in her anchor in the field of water wherein his ship-yard thrust its toes. A small boat then presently put forth and made straight for the ship-yard landing, where three men calmly alighted, throwing ashore a small heap of shabby-genteel-looking baggage.

Somewhat annoyed, thus to have his precincts employed by any Tom, Dick and Harry of chance, Phipps stepped from between the ribs of a ship's skeleton, which was being daily articulated, and strode toward the intruders. Then a rumble, which ought to have been a shout, broke from his lips, about the same second that a roar of joy appeared to leap out of the foremost of the strangers, who had landed and who were coming boldly forward.

William Phipps and the leader of the invading trio then rushed hotly together and collided, giving each other a bear-like hug from which the ship-builder presently extricated himself at a thought of how he might be shocking all or any good Puritans who might chance to be witnessing the scene.

“Well, shatter my hilt! and God bless you! if it isn’t your same old beloved self!” said the stranger, heartily.

“My boy! Bless your eyes, Adam, I never thought to see you again!” said bluff William Phipps. “You big young rascal! You full-rigged ship! Where have you come from? What do you mean by making me swear myself into purgatory at your carelessness in getting yourself killed? You twenty-gun frigate—you—you big——”

He left off for very constraint, for his throat blocked up, despite his most heroic efforts. He and Adam Rust began to roar with laughter, the tears in their eyes needing some excuse. Meantime the two companions who had come with the young rover, stood gazing about them, in patience, and likewise looking in wonder on the two men before them.

There was reason enough to look, for Adam and Phipps were a pair to command attention. It seemed as if a founder had used the big ship-builder as a pattern on which to refine his art in casting the younger man. Adam’s back was a trifle narrower; his chest was a bit wider; he was trimmer at the waist, neater at the thigh, longer-armed. His hands were smaller, just as his movements were quicker and lighter.

Although Adam’s hair crowned him with tawny

ringlets of gold, while that of Phipps was browner, and though the young fellow wore a small mustache, in contrast, to the smooth-shaved face of his friend, it might yet be said that the two men looked alike. Both had steadfast eyes with the same frank expression, the same blue tint and the same integrity about them.

In their dress the two men differed. William Phipps, whatsoever he might indulge himself in doing when away on the sea, conformed to the dark-brown simplicity of the Puritans when in Boston. Adam, on the other hand, wore a brown velvet coat, with long green sleeves; which, though at present somewhat faded and moulting, had once been fine feathers in England. His shirt still showed evidences of having been adorned with a profusion of ruffles; while his breeches of deep forest green, disappeared at the knee into the maw of his wide-topped leather boots. He wore at his hip a veteran blade of steel, in a scabbard as battered as the outer gate of a stronghold. When not in his fighting fist, the hilt of this weapon contented itself with caresses from his softer hand, the left.

The two men having shaken hands for the third time, and having looked each other over from head to foot, and laughed and asked each other a dozen questions, to which neither had returned any answers, Adam suddenly remembered his comrades, waiting in the background. He turned to them now, not without affection.

“Here, Pike and Halberd,” he said, “you must meet my third father, Captain William Phipps, a noble man to whom you will owe allegiance all your miserable

lives. William, these are my beef-eaters. Don't ask me where I got them. They are neither out of jail nor heaven. But they have let me save their lives and feed them and clothe them, and they are valiant, faithful rascals. To know them is to love them, and not to know them is to be snubbed by Satan. They have been my double shadow for a year, sharing my prosperous condition like two peers of the realm."

The beef-eaters grinned as they exchanged salutations with Phipps. Pike was a short individual, inclined to be fat, even when on the slimmest of rations. The pupils of his eyes were like two suns that had risen above the horizon of his lower lids, only to obscure themselves under the cloud-like lids above. Their expression, especially when he gazed upward into Adam's face, was something too appealingly saint-like and beseeching for anything mortal to possess. Halberd was a ladder of a man up which everything, save success, had clambered to paint expressions on his face, which was grave and melancholy to the verge of the ludicrous. He had two little bunches of muscle, each of which stuck out like half a walnut, at the corners of his jaws, where they had grown and developed as a result of his clamping his molars together, in a determination to do or to be something which had, apparently, never as yet transpired.

The two looked about as much like beef-eaters as a mouse looks like a man-eater. They were ragged, where not fantastic, in their apparel; they were obviously fitter for a feast than a fight, for the sea had depleted both of their hoardings of vigor and courage.

"Sire," said Halberd, theatrically, "we have had

nothing but good reports of you for a year." Whether he placed his hand on his heart or his stomach, as he said this, and what he meant to convey as his meaning, could never be wholly clear.

"We shall be honored to fight for you, if need arise," said Pike, who panted somewhat, on all occasions, "while there is a breath in our bodies."

"It is a privilege to know you both," said Phipps, whose gravity was as dry as tinder.

"Any friend of the Sachem's is a friend of ours," responded Halberd. He said this grandly and made a profound bow.

"The 'Sachem'?" repeated Phipps, and he looked at Adam, inquiringly.

Adam had the grace to blush a trifle, thus to be caught in one of the harmless little boasts in which he had indulged himself, over sea. "Just a foolish habit the two have gotten into," he murmured.

"Ah," said William Phipps. "Well, then, Sachem, it will soon be growing dark, you had best come home with me to dinner."

Involuntarily Adam turned about to look at the beef-eaters. Their eyes had abruptly taken on a preternatural brightness at the word dinner.

"I have much to ask you and much to tell you," Phipps added. "And the goodwife would exact this honor if she knew you were come."

The invitation did not include Adam's retinue. He swallowed, as if the delicious odors of one of Goodwife Phipp's dinners were about to escape him.

"Well," he said, "the honors are all the other way about, but—the fact is—a previous engagement—I—I

have promised a rousing hot din—I have accepted an invitation to dine with the beef-eaters, at the Crow and Arrow.”

The ship builder-knew all about those “rousing hot dinners” of cold eel-pie, potatoes and mustard, for which the Crow and Arrow tavern was not exactly famous. He looked at Adam, to whom as their sachem the beef-eaters appealed with their eyes, like two faithful animals. Adam was regarding the pair silently, a faint smile of cheer and camaraderie on his face.

“But—but my invitation included our friends,” Phipps hastened to say. “Come, come, the tavern can wait till to-morrow. Gentlemen, you will certainly not disappoint me.”

“’Tis well spoken that the tavern can wait,” said Pike.

“To disappoint the friend of the Sachem would be a grievous thing,” said Halberd. “Let the galled tavern sweat with impatience.”

They would all have started away together at once, had not Phipps noted the heap of baggage, left untidily upon his landing when the travelers arrived.

“Well,” said he, “Adam, you know the way to the house, suppose you and your friends carry your worldly goods to the tavern, engage your apartments, and then follow me on. I, in the meantime, can hasten home to apprise the wife that you are coming, with the beef-eaters, and she can therefore make due preparations in honor of the event.”

“This is good sense,” said Adam. “Go along, or we shall be there before you.”

Phipps, with a half dozen backward looks at his

guests and their shabby chattels, made his way out of the ship-yard without further delay. Adam and his retinue gripped three or four parcels apiece and started, with clank of sword, and in some discomfort, for the Crow and Arrow.

CHAPTER II.

AN UNGODLY PERFORMANCE.

ADAM RUST knew the Crow and Arrow more by that repute which had traveled back to England, through the medium of young stalwarts and sailors, than he did from personal acquaintance with its charms. He had seen the place frequently enough, when first he came to Boston with William Phipps, but the town had expanded much since then and bore an air of unfamiliarity. The young man and his beef-eaters therefore wandered somewhat from their course.

Being overladen and dressed out of the ordinary fashion, the trio soon found themselves attracting attention, particularly from certain of the youths of the quarter and the rough characters incidental to shipping and the neighborhood thereof. Adam was carrying a long box, somewhat decrepit with age. It swung against his legs and struck an occasional post, or a corner, held insecurely as it was by his little finger only, which was passed through a brass handle. In this manner, and with a growing cluster of curious persons beginning to follow on behind, the party were in sight of the tavern at last, when this long box of Adam's abruptly opened and spilled out a richly darkened old violin.

With a short exclamation of impatience, Adam halted and dropped his other bundles. Over these tall Halberd fell, with a great clatter of weapons, tin box and shaken bones. Adam fended him off from the violin, snatched it up and scrutinized it with the eager concern which a mother might bestow upon a delicate child. He found it uninjured, but, as it might have been smashed, he clung to it fondly, reluctant to place it again in its treacherous case.

Naturally the downfall of Halberd had delighted the gamin and the sailors following. These formed a cluster about the party, and their numbers drew additional spectators rapidly. A number of seafaring men shoved stoutly forward, their eyes glistening at sight of the musical instrument.

"I say, give us something, then, on that there red boy!" demanded one of the men, as healthy a looking rascal as ever drew breath.

"You look a bonny lad, come on—there's a good un," said another.

"Rattle her guts," said a third. "We ain't heard the like of a fiddle since we came to this town of preachers."

Adam looked quietly about him. He knew most of the fellows about in the rude circle for rough English rovers who would love him if he played, or knock him and his belongings playfully into the street if he refused. He was not accustomed to churlishness; moreover, he felt particularly in the mood for playing. The ruddy sunset, the warm breath of the passing day, the very taste of American air, seemed lusty and joyous, despite the rigid Puritanical spirit of the mirth-denying people

of the colony. He took up the bow, twanged the strings, tightened two that had become laggard, and jumped into the middle of a rollicking composition that seemed to bubble up out of the body of the violin and tumble off into the crowd in a species of mad delight.

Had the instrument been a spirit of wine, richly dark red as old port, and rendered alive by the frolicking bow, it could not have thrown off more merry snatches of melody's mirth. It chuckled, it caught its breath, like a fat old monk at his laughing, it broke out in guffaws of hilarity, till not a soul in the audience could keep his feet seemly beneath him.

The sailors danced, boldly, though clumsily. Their faces beamed with innocent drunkenness, for drunk they were, with what seemed like the fumes and taste of this wine of sound. They had been denied it so long that it went to their heads at the first draught.

Across the street, issuing quietly and, he hoped, unobserved, from a door that led into the tavern, a Puritan father now appeared, wiping his mouth as a man has no occasion for doing unless he had recently dipped his upper lip into a mug. He suddenly halted, at the sound of music from over the way. He frowned at the now somewhat dense assemblage of boys and citizens surrounding Adam Rust, and worked up a mask of severity on his face from which it had been temporarily absent. He opened his mouth, as if to speak, and then, realizing that he might not be heard at this distance from them, moved a rod toward his fellow-beings and took a stand in the street.

At this moment an ominous snap resounded above both the playing and its accompaniment of scuffling feet

and gruff explosions of enjoyment and hearty appreciation. Instantly Adam ceased playing. He had felt a string writhe beneath his fingers. The man in the roadway grasped at the moment instantly, to raise his voice.

“Begone, disperse, you vagabonds!” he said. “What is the meaning of this ungodly performance? Disperse, I say, you are bedeviled by this shameless disciple of Satan!”

Adam, intent on his violin, which he found had not broken but had merely slipped a string, heard this tirade, naturally, as did all the others. A few boys sneaked immediately about the cluster of men and sped away, as if from some terrible wrath to come.

“Who is yon sufferer for melancholy?” said Adam, looking carelessly at the would-be interrupter. Then suddenly a gleam came into his eye, as he recognized in the man one of the harsh hypocrites who had been among the few zealots who had imprisoned him, years before. “Halberd,” he added, “fetch the gentleman forward. Methinks he fain would dance and make merry among us.”

His opening question had been hailed with snorts of amusement; his proposal ignited all the roguishness in the crowd. Halberd, nothing loth to add his quota to the general fun, strode forward at once, way being made by the admiring throng, and he bowed profoundly before the bridling admonisher in the street. Then without warning, he scampered nimbly to the rear of the man of severity, took him by the collar and the slack of his knickerbockers and hustled him precipitately into the gathering.

Adam began to play at once. The spectators gathered

about the astonished and indignant person of severity, thirsty for fun.

"You evidently wanted to dance, therefore by all means commence," said Adam.

"You are a veritable limb of Satan!" said the man. "You shall be reported for this unseemly——"

"Halberd," interrupted Adam, "the gentleman is as shy and timid as your veriest girl. Could you not persuade him to dance?"

"I was born for persuasion," said Halberd. Thereupon he drew from his belt a pistol, most formidable, whether loaded or not, and pushed its metal lips against the neck of the hedged-in Puritan, whom he continued to restrain by the collar. "Make merry for this goodly company by doing a few dainty steps," he requested.

The crowd pushed in closer and roared with delight. Some one among them knocked the reluctant dancer's knees forward. He almost fell down.

"He's beginning!" cried Adam, and he went for his fiddle with the bow as if he were fencing with a dozen pirates.

"Dance!" commanded Halberd, "dance!"

Terpsichore's victim was not a man of sand. Drops of perspiration oozed out on his forehead. A look of abject fear drove the mask of severity from his face. He jumped up and down ridiculously, his knees knocking together for his castanets.

"Faster!" cried Adam, fiddling like a madman.

"Faster!" echoed Halberd, with his pistol-muzzle nosing in the dancer's ribs.

The man jumped higher, but not faster; he was too

weakened by cowardice. The sailors joined in. They could not keep their feet on the ground. The contagion spread. Pike and Halberd joined the hopping. The offending admonisher looked about at them in a frenzy of despair, afraid of who might be witnessing his exhibition. He was a sorry dancer, for he was so eager to please that he flopped his arms deliriously, as if to convince his beholders of his willingness to make himself as entertaining as possible. When he suddenly collapsed and fell down, Adam ceased playing. The crowd settled on the pavement and applauded.

"For shame, good friend," said Adam, solemnly, "now that I observe your garb, I am shocked and amazed at your conduct. Friends, let us go to the tavern and report this gentleman's unseemly behavior. In payment for the fiddling, you may fetch my bales of goods and merchandise." He waved to his shabby baggage and led the way to the Crow and Arrow, which had long before disgorged nearly all of its company, and its landlord, to add to the audience in the street.

Flinging up his only piece of gold, the young rover ordered refreshment for all who crowded into the tavern, and while they were drinking, he dragged the beef-eaters, with all the "bales of merchandise," away to the meager apartments provided above stairs in the sorry hostelry.

In the darkness of the hall, he ran heavily against some one who was just on the point of quitting a room. The innocent person was bowled endways.

"Confound your impudence!" said the voice of a man. "Why don't you look where you are going?"

"I couldn't see for fools in the way," retorted Adam. "I am no king, requiring you to fall before me."

"I can't see your face, but I can see that you are an arrant knave," said the other hotly. "You never could have had a proper drubbing, or you would be less reckless of your speech!"

"I have always been pitted to fight with bragging rascals of about your size and ability with a weapon, else I might have been drubbed," Adam flung back, laying his hand on his sword as he spoke. "It shames my steel to think of engaging a ten-pin!"

"By all tokens, sir, you are blind, as well as idiotic, to walk into death so heedlessly. Be good enough to follow me into the yard."

"Oh, fie on a death that flees and entreats me to follow," was Adam's answer. "I rolled you once in this hall; I can do so again. Halberd—Pike, candles to place at the head and feet of death!"

The beef-eaters, having reached the apartments appointed for their use, had heard the disturbance in the hall, and expecting trouble, had already lighted the candles. With three of these they now came forth. The hall would have been light enough had it been in communication with the outside world and the twilight, but as it was, it was nearly dark.

"I grieve for your mother," sneered the stranger, whose sword could be heard backing out of its scabbard. "You must be young to be so spendthrift of your life."

"On the contrary, you will find what a miser I am, even as to the drops of my blood," said Adam. "No one ever yet accused the Sachem——"

"The Sachem!" interrupted the other voice.

Halberd, who had sheltered the candle he bore with his hand, now threw its light on the face of the man near by him.

"Shatter my hilt!" exclaimed young Rust, "Wainsworth!"

"Odds walruses!" said the man addressed as Wainsworth, "what a pretty pair of fools we are. By gad, Adam, to think I wouldn't know you by your voice!"

Adam had leaped forward, while his sword was diving back into its sheath. He caught Wainsworth by the hand and all but wrung it off.

"Bless your old soul," he said, "why didn't you say who you were?"

"I was kept busy listening to you telling me who and what I was," Wainsworth assured him, good-naturedly. "I never heard so much truth in all my life."

"I never thought to be so incontinently found out myself," Adam confessed contritely. "But as long as I have found you, I feel as good as if I had fought a good fight and wiped my blade. Indeed, Henry, I am tremendously glad to see you. How did you get here? When did you come? What a blundering fool I was!"

"Come in, come in to my castle," said Wainsworth, turning back to the apartment he had been quitting when knocked over. "Bring in your friends. You shall all share in my dinner. I'm a ship, burdened with news for cargo to be unloaded. Come in here; we'll talk all night."

"But I am due at a dinner already, with my beef-

eaters," said Rust. "I have been delayed past all reason now, but——"

"You weren't delayed by our duel of words, I trust?"

"No, no, but I have kept our host waiting, nevertheless. I shall be back before the night's worn through, however, and then I am yours till breath fails me."

"Haste away then, Sachem Rust, for the sooner you are gone the sooner I shall see you returned; and I shall consume myself with impatience till I can tell you of the sweetest plight mortal man ever got himself tangled in. I've got to tell you, for no one else on earth would answer. Begone, then. Good-by, and hasten back."

Adam bade him *au revoir*, for he felt that already William Phipps must be thinking him sadly remiss and ungracious.

Preparations as to evening dress were soon completed. They consisted in a brisk wash of face and hands for the trio, not one of the party being endowed with a second suit of clothing. Thus they were upon the road, walking soberly, though diligently, toward the Captain's residence, before the twilight had begun to fade.

CHAPTER III.

'TWIXT CUP AND LIP.

WITH appetites still further whetted by their various diversions, the comrades were hardly made happier when Adam found that once more the many years' growth of Boston town confused him. It was something of a walk to the Phipps' domicile from the Crow and Arrow the best one could do. With devious windings added, it became the next thing to provoking.

"Aha, at last I know where we are," said Adam, finally. "These streets are as bad as London's. But ten minutes more and we shall be at the board."

"If this is not so," said Halberd, gravely, with a memory of seeing Adam part with the last money which they possessed, "it would be a kindness to let us lie down and perish here."

"This is a most unlikely-looking street," added Pike, dolefully.

"What do you know of Boston streets?" inquired Adam, who had a doubt or two of the place himself. "Good beef-eaters, if you weary, wait here for a moment, till I can run a little along this road, to see where it leads. If it is right I will presently whistle; if wrong I can the sooner return."

The beef-eaters with one accord sat down upon a

block of stone, while their leader strode hastily up a passage which was in reality an alley, at the rear of a number of residences. With a hope that he would soon emerge into a street which he thought should be in the neighborhood, Adam almost ran. Thus he disappeared about a turn of the lane.

He had gone less than twenty rods when he found himself approaching a small assemblage of boys, who were yelling, in suppressed voices, and gathering stones which they were throwing with wild aim into a corner, where the coming darkness had already formed a center of shadows. Rust was well among these young scamps before they were aware of his presence. One urchin had by this secured a long stick with which he advanced, the others making room to let him through, to poke and jab at something which the lads had evidently driven to bay where it could not escape. Yet so afraid did the young rogues appear to be that this something would yet fly upon them and do them great harm, that Adam walked at once among them, touching one upon the shoulder.

"The witch!" screamed this lad, as if the devil himself had clutched him. With yells of terror all the boys scudded swiftly away, for a matter of twenty feet, and then turned about to look at Rust. Seeing a man merely, they were reassured. It is a singular and doubtless a fortunate matter that there was never such a thing conceived as a male witch.

"What have you here?" said Adam, pleasantly.

"A witch's cat!" cried one of the boldest youths, re-approaching. "We drove it in the corner to stone it to death!"

Now Adam had a lingering fondness for cats, from a time not many years past.

"A witch's cat?" he repeated. "What nonsense! What harm can a poor cat do to big healthy boys like you? There are no witches, you young varlets." He went into the corner and peered about eagerly, to find the dumb victim of the mad superstition then subtly growing in that Massachusetts colony.

"There was a witch and she ran away, screaming!" scolded back the bold spokesman of the group of boys, now gaining courage to edge nearer. "She ran away through this garden!" He pointed to a rear yard, leading off the alley to a house not far distant.

"She made me cough up pins and needles," asserted another young liar, glibly. "And a monster black monkey with cock's feet followed her when she ran."

"He's a prince of the powers of air himself," whispered another lad, in awe-stricken tones.

Adam had found the cat, a middle-aged animal, frightened, hurt, soiled, but intelligent, since it knew it was being protected at last. He lifted it forth from its small retreat, finding it to be a heavy, black-and-white specimen, too inoffensive to scratch and claw, even in its terror.

"You young——" he started to say.

"Here she comes! Here she comes!" yelled one of the lads, interrupting. "Two of them! Run for your lives!"

The self-scared young cowards, screaming like so many demons, darted down the alley as fast as their legs would let them go. Adam looked where one had pointed and beheld, indeed, two female figures coming

on a distracted run through the near-by yard, toward him as he was standing with the cat in his arms.

Although the first veil of darkness was already drawn through the air, Rust could see that they were two young women who were coming. The one who led, he then noted, was a plain, but a sweet, wholesome-looking girl, who was evidently much excited. He stepped forward toward her, with the cat, divining it was the animal she had come for, and so for the moment he neglected to glance at the second young woman.

When he did look at her she was not far and he caught his breath quickly. "Shatter my hilt!" was the thought that leaped into his brain, "they do have young witches here after all!"

Advancing to the middle of the alley he made a profound bow, as the foremost girl came pantingly from the garden gate. The girl, seeing him now for the first time, halted abruptly.

"Good evening," said Adam, "may I have the honor of restoring your pet? He is excellently well behaved and, I trust, not seriously hurt."

The girl walked timidly toward him. Her face flushed rosy red with pleasure and confusion. Her companion, having been caught on a rosebush, in the garden, was delayed and was stooping to disentangle her skirt from the thorns.

"Oh, sir, you are very kind," stammered the girl confronting Adam. "I thought they would kill him. He isn't mine, but I also hold him——"

The second young lady now came hastily out at the gate. Adam had been too polite to look past number one, in search for the one he thought so witching, but

now his heart bounded to see her coming. She ran precipitately at him, breaking in upon her companion's speech.

"Oh, Standing-Panther," she cried, impetuously, "my own dear, darling love, why did you ever come out to such a place?"

She plucked her pet from Adam's arm in one swoop. Rust, at the old name, which he had buried with memories that sorely harrowed his soul, dropped his hat, which he had doffed, and raising his hand to his cheek in wonder, stared at the girl before him with widened eyes.

"At—at your service, Miss—Mistress Gar—Mistress Merrill," he stuttered.

Garde, a vision of beauty distraught, suddenly looked up in his face. Frank amazement was depicted in her glorious eyes.

"I beg—your pardon," stammered Adam, "I see you were speaking to your cat, and not to me."

"You!—Adam!—Mr.—Mr. Rust!" she exclaimed. A red-hot blush surged upward, flooding her face, her neck and even her delicate ears. "Not Little-Standing—Oh dear me! Why, Prudence, what did I say? It—it isn't really——" she stopped in confusion.

"Adam Rust, Kneeling Panther at your service," supplied the rover. He made a bow that was truly splendid, with a long sweep of his hat and a touch of his knee on the pavement, that for sheer grace could not have been equaled in Boston. "Miss—Mistress Merrill, you have not quite forgotten that you commissioned me to bring you something from Hispaniola?" he added.

“But you—but you have grown so,” said Garde, still as red as a rose. “And to meet like this—that was such a long time ago. I—I thank you for saving my cat. I—we—Prudence, you must thank Mr. Rust.”

Prudence, on whom Adam had scarcely looked, since seeing Garde, had been standing there looking at Rust with a sudden-born love in her eyes that was almost adoration. She had developed, out of the Puritanical spirit of the times, a control of her various emotions that Garde would never possess. Therefore she had herself in hand at a second’s notice.

“I have thanked Mr. Rust,” she answered, quietly.

Garde was stealing a look at Adam the second he turned in politeness to Prudence.

“This was no service at all,” he said. “Pray expend no further words upon it.”

“Oh, Adam, I am so glad——” burst from Garde’s lips impetuously, but she checked her utterance the instant his glance came flashing back to hers, and added. “I mean, Mr. Rust, I am so glad the cat wasn’t hurt, and, Prudence, we must surely return to the house at once.”

This was not at all what Garde had started to say, nor what she wanted to say; but though it was the same Adam, quite to her heart’s satisfaction, yet he was now a man, and a maidenly diffidence shamed her riotous gladness, and—Prudence was present.

“But,” said Adam, fumbling in a pocket over the region of his heart, “the trinket I brought you from Hispaniola?”

“Oh, marry, it has kept so well all these years,” said Garde roguishly, “surely it must still keep till—surely

anyway till daylight. Really, sir, we must thank you again and return before it is actually dark." She gave him one look which, had he been a woman, he would readily have interpreted, but being a man, somewhat of its significance was lost upon him.

"But now I know I have kept it too long already," he insisted, still tugging at the stubborn pocket. "Surely——"

"It will be the riper for keeping a little longer," said Garde, almost impatient with him for not seeing that she wanted to receive it only when they two were alone together. "We thank you once more, for saving Little-Standing-Panther, and so—good night."

"But when—what day?—to-morrow?" cried the eager rover. "When may I give it?"

"Oh stupid!" said Garde to herself, almost vexed at his lack of understanding and tact. Aloud she called back, "Did you say good night? Prudence, say good night again to Mr. Rust."

Prudence called good night once more, this making her third time, and Adam was left there in the alley alone. He went to the gate and, leaning over it, clutched two of its pickets in his hands, as once before he had done to another gate, and stood there gazing ardently into the gathering darkness.

At length, with a heavy sigh, of joy and impatience blended, he strode a little down the lane. Then he strode back. So, up and down he paraded, for fifteen minutes. At the end of this time he suddenly bethought him of the beef-eaters and the dinner at William Phipp's. He then hastened, tardily enough, back the way he had originally come.

Eager to find his companions, yet completely scatter-brained by the meeting with Garde, the sight of her radiant beauty, and the chaos of plans for seeing her again at daylight, which were teeming in his head, he fairly fell over the outstretched feet of his faithful followers before he saw them.

They were still sitting upon the block of stone. They had interlocked their arms, for mutual support, and then had fallen fast asleep, worn out with the long day and made weak by a longer fast.

"Good old beef-eaters," said Adam, affectionately, and gently shaking them by the shoulders, he aroused them, got them on their feet and guided them out of the alley. By great good fortune, he came to a landmark he remembered from his short sojourn in Boston, years before. With this as a bearing, he made good time to the Captain's house. They met William Phipps at the gate, going forth to hunt them up.

"We have sauntered along," said Adam, carelessly, "for such air as this is a tonic to the appetite."

CHAPTER IV.

THE OPENING OF A VISTA.

FOR a man who had taken so much tonic, Adam had but indifferent relish for the savory and altogether comforting little dinner which Goodwife Phipps had kept all warm and waiting for the coming of her guests. His head was filled with love and with altercations between hope that Garde had meant this and fears that she might have meant that, and with conjuring up all her speeches and glances, till he could hardly have told whether he was afoot or horseback.

But if their leader neglected his opportunities, the beef-eaters made good the reputation for three, as swordsmen with knife and fork. Fortunately Goodwife Phipps had provided amply. But a fowl became a glistening skeleton ; a hot meat-pie was represented at last by a dish that yawned like an empty chasm ; a pyramid of Indian maize became a scattered wreckage of cobs, and potatoes, bread and pudding vanished into mere memories of what they once had been.

Adam, although he said nothing, talked like an auctioneer, during the meal, to divert what he could of the attention which his retinue perforce attracted to their appetites. This innocent ruse was not lost on the charming little wife of William Phipps. She was a sweet little woman, plump, black-haired, brown-eyed

and gifted by Nature with much vivacity, in her wit and in her engaging manners. She was older than her husband, having been the widow of one merchant Hull, when she and the Captain wedded. They were a happy couple, being indeed un-Puritanly joyous in their partnership. She had taken a great liking to Adam, when Phipps first brought him home. Now that he was a man, she liked him none the less, yet she saw that he would always be a big, straightforward boy. She watched him now with pleasure, listening to his quips and sallies of nonsense, and nodding motherly at his evident concern for his two forlorn beef-eaters, so obviously attached to him by ties of affection.

The dinner being at length come to an end, with great satisfaction to all concerned, Adam counseled the expanded beef-eaters to fare to the Crow and Arrow, lest in their absence anything befall to prevent their occupancy of the selected apartments. As nothing was to be had to drink where they were, the worthy two were glad to act upon his suggestion. Accordingly Adam and his hosts were left to themselves, whereupon they fell upon a banquet of narrative and reminiscence forthwith.

“Now, Adam, tell us all about where you have been, and what you have done, and all about everything,” said Mrs. Phipps, putting her plump elbows on the table, which she had swiftly cleared of the dinner wreckage. “Just begin at the day you left, with William, and tell us all there is. But tell us first, have you fallen in love? Of course you must have, but I do hope you will like one of our own girls best.”

“I fear you would have me begin at the last end first,

after all," said Adam, thinking how recently he had fallen victim to Eros. "My tale is brief and of no interest. William bade me cultivate the society of gentlemen, when he sent me to England. Well, I had fencing and fiddling of an Italian nobleman; I have fought with holy friars and princes; I have sworn strange oaths with prelates and bishops; I have danced with nuns and duchesses; I have ridden to hounds with curs and Kings. If I have not learned drinking, gambling, love-making, dueling, swearing and sundry other pretty accomplishments, then beshrew me for a clod and call the court no place for schooling. I am richer than I was, since I may look up at any moment and see you both at a glance. By the same token I am happier. As to my heart, I'll take oath I left it in Boston. And there you have me."

"Oh, this sounds very naughty indeed," said Mrs. Phipps.

"I never counseled you to apprentice yourself to the devil," said Phipps. "You were first to learn navigation, of some——"

"Oh, of that I neglected to speak," interrupted the rover. "William, you will never make an anchor out of sea foam, nor a solid ship's master out of me, else my first or my last preceptor would have finished me off roundly."

"Who was your latest chief?" the Captain inquired.

"Captain William Kidd," said Adam, "a generous friend, a fearless and skilful seaman, and as bold a fighting man as ever clutched a hilt. I met him at Barcelona, shipped with him for Bristol, fell in with my beef-eaters, got rid of my money and pushed my

sword through a pup—Lord Something-or-other—and was still in time to catch Captain Kidd at Portsmouth for New York. But I can't bark enough for a sea-dog, as Kidd was good enough to tell me himself."

William Phipps nodded and nodded. Outwardly he was calm enough ; inwardly he stewed with heat. Adam had but added fuel to the fever of unrest and thirst for adventure with which he had been born. He was not jealous of all that his protégé had accomplished ahead of himself—indeed, he had furthered the lad's advancement, at the expense of his own sense of bereavement when he and Adam parted,—but he was consumed with impatience to be hewing at the great career for which he had from boyhood felt himself destined. A light of determination burned in his eyes. He saw that the boy before him had utterly outstripped him—the boy to whom he had imparted all his own meager, self-acquired education. Not for a moment did he regret that from Hispaniola he had sent the lad to England, with a fellow-captain, nor would he for any price have stripped his protégé of one single experience, but his mouth grew dry with the lust for adventure that was glowing within him.

His wife saw these indications. She understood what was passing in his mind. Before she had even sighed to herself, as a woman must, who feels herself on the brink of a separation from one she truly loves, she consented mentally to what she knew he would presently suggest. What she was thus prepared for, came sooner than she had expected it might.

"Adam," said Phipps, somewhat huskily, "I have been waiting for something—I never knew what—to

come along and start me off after the fortune I have promised to get for the wife."

"You are fortune enough for me, dear," Mrs. Phipps interposed, in spite of herself. "I should be satisfied to live like this forever."

"I know," said the Captain, "but I promised you should have a fair brick house in the Green Lane, to the north, and I mean that you shall have it. Adam, you are the something I have been waiting for, but what with my worrying, over thinking you probably dead, I have never realized the truth till this night."

"And what may it be my privilege to do?" said Adam.

"Go with me to recover a fortune, sunk in a wreck. She rests on a reef in the Bahamas, in a few fathoms of water. She was laded with gold and went down with every ounce. I've got the maps, and now that I've got you, bless your heart, we can sail in a week!"

"And how have you learned of this sunken treasure?" said Adam, who for some reason appeared not at all boyishly eager to set off on this new adventure. "Has somebody given you this tale and the maps as the price for a well-built brig?"

"I had the information from a Spaniard, who died at my ship-yard," said Phipps. "He was the sole survivor of the wrecked vessel. I gave him work. He was grateful. Death seized him suddenly, but before the end came, he told me his tale, he said, as a measure of gratitude, directing me to feel in his pockets for the maps, which I did. I have waited for what I now am certain was your return."

"Well," said Adam, thoughtfully, twisting the ends

of his small mustache, "you couldn't easily have paid me a greater compliment, I am sure; but, my dear friend, you place me in an awkward position."

"Awkward position? What awkward position?" said Phipps. "Here you are a good swordsman, a man of some knowledge, and the companion I would select of all the men I know." Here Adam bowed solemnly. "Now what is to hinder us from making this venture together? What do you mean by this awkward position business?"

"I mean," said the rover, "that I seem to serve no better purpose, the moment I return to Boston, than to separate you two good people. Now I am sensitive about a thing like that. I don't like to be the cause of such a separation."

"What nonsense, you——" started the Captain.

"I prepared my mind for William's adventure, long ago," interrupted Mrs. Phipps. "If he doesn't go with you, he will go with some one else. And as long as he is bent on going in the end, I should feel so much better, Adam, if you were with him."

Adam bowed to them both, again. He was glad to do this, as he was, in point of fact, somewhat confused as to what to say.

"There, you young rascal," said Phipps, "that knocks away your shores and you are launched before you know it."

"But," suggested Adam, with an air of great solicitude for his friend's interests, "do you really think any wild-goose chase of this description could be as solid and certain and wholesome as the ship-building business? Would I be justified in encouraging you, Cap-

tain Phipps, to leave your established business for such a wild——”

“Wild?” interposed Phipps. “You—you—now look here, what do you mean—you, by your own accounts, the wildest young scamp afloat? Wild? As if anything could be too wild for you. There is something at the bottom of all this. Now out with it!”

“Why, William!” said Goodwife Phipps, “where are your eyes? Why, Adam must have a sweetheart in Boston!”

Rust flushed hotly. His eyes would not, for all his pulling at them, refrain from dancing. He conjured up an immediate fit of coughing, and therefore held a handkerchief before his face.

Phipps looked at him suspiciously. “Is that what ails you?” he demanded. “Is that why you are so hot to remain here in Boston?”

“Now I leave it to you both, as two good, sensible people,” said Rust, artfully, “how could such a catastrophe have happened? I left Boston seven years ago, while a mere cub, and I have been here now less than that many hours. Do you think that between sunset and my coming here I could have saved some fair angel’s life—or the life of her—her—well, say her pet panther? Does that seem likely, or reasonable, say?”

“I wouldn’t dare trust you not to be saving a dozen,” grumbled Phipps. “When a man has associated with gentlemen, you never can reckon on his conduct.”

“Of course it does seem absurd, Adam, I admit,” said Mrs. Phipps, who was enjoying the conversation mightily. “I had to make some suggestion. And—

oh, why, perhaps some young lady has recently arrived here from the old country. Is that it, Adam?"

"I give you my word of honor that no young lady has come to Boston, since I went abroad, for whom I care a brass farthing," Adam assured his hostess. "The further you go in this, the more innocent you will find me."

"Then are you turned lazy, or what is it that ails you," inquired the Captain, "that you fail to leap, as, by my word, I had thought you would, to embrace this opportunity?"

"Oh, oh, poor dear Adam," said the Captain's wife, interrupting any answer Rust might have been framing, "perhaps I know what it is, at last." She went to her husband quickly and whispered something in his ear.

"Hum!" said Phipps, who was inclined to be a bit short with his protégé for his many equivocal answers, "Why couldn't he say so at once? See here, Adam, what's all this rigmarole about your pride? If you haven't got any money, what's the odds to me? Who's asking you to furnish any funds? I've got the brig and I've got provisions and arms in plenty. If that is what ails you, drop it, sir, drop it!"

Adam, willing to share another's money as readily as he would give his own last penny to a friend, had thought of nothing half so remote as this to offer as an excuse for remaining in Boston, under the same sky with Garde. But now that it was broached, he fathered it as quickly and affectionately as if he had indeed been its parent.

"I had hoped it would not be unreasonable for me to crave a few days' grace before giving you my answer to

your generous proposition," he said, "for I am not without hopes of replenishing our treasury at an early date."

"But in the meantime——" started Phipps.

"Dearest," interrupted his wife, with feminine tenderness of thought for any innocent pride, "surely you have no mind to sail to-night? And there are so many things for Adam to tell."

The Captain, who had been drawing down his brow, in that serious keep-at-it spirit which through all his life was the backbone of his remarkable, self-made success, slacked off the intensity of his mood and smiled at his wife, indulgently. He loved her and he loved Adam above anything else in the world.

"Get you behind me, golden treasure," he said, with a wave of his big, wholesome hand. "Adam, I would rather hear you talk than to pocket rubies."

"I must be cautious lest I bankrupt myself by telling all I know this evening," said Adam. "Indeed, dear friends, it grows late already. I must set my beef-eaters the good example of keeping seemly hours." He arose to go before the sunken treasure topic should again break out, with its many fascinations and pitfalls.

His hosts protested against his leaving, yet they presently discovered that the hour was, as he said, no longer early. He therefore departed and wended his way through the now deserted streets, toward the Crow and Arrow, his heart bounding with joyousness, his brain awlirl with memories of everything of the evening, save the discussion of the sunken treasure.

CHAPTER V.

A WEIGHTY CONFIDENCE.

AT the tavern, when Adam entered, Halberd had succumbed to a plethora of comfort, which had followed too soon on the paucity thereof, which had been the program of the three for many weeks. He was snoring fiercely in a corner. Pike, on the other hand, was inflated with life and activity of speech. He was bragging eloquently, not only of his own prowess, but also of that of Halberd and Adam as well.

Adam heard the end of a peroration of self-appraisal in which the doughty Pike announced that one of his recent feats had been the slaying of two murderous, giant pirates with his naked fists.

Among the sailors, dock-hands and tavern-loafers who made up the auditors who were being entertained by these flights of narrative, was a little, red-nosed, white-eyed man of no significance, who now stood up and removed his coat.

"If you would like to have a bit of fun with me," said he. "I'll play one of those pirates, till we see what you can do."

Pike looked at him ruefully, rubbing his chin while thinking what to answer to this challenge. He then waved his hand, grandly.

"Good sir," he said, "the Sachem, my honored as-

sociate, has such an appetite for these encounters that until he shall be satisfied I would have no heart to deprive him of such good material as I can see you would make for a fight. Doubtless I can arrange for him to do you the honor you seek, after which I shall be pleased to weep at your funeral."

"I would rather fight with him than you," said the would-be belligerent, "but before he comes, if you would like to have your neck broken——"

Satisfied that this business had gone far enough, Adam strode into the tap-room, where the jovial spirits had congregated.

"My friends," he interrupted, "you can put your necks to better purpose by pouring something down them. Landlord, attend my guests. Pike——"

But the pirate-exterminator had fled, first edging to the door, at the appearance of his chief, and then clattering up the stairs to the rooms above with a noise like cavalry in full retreat.

"But if you would like to fight," started the accommodating manikin, still in process of baring his drum-stick arms, "why, Mr. Sachem——" but he was not permitted to finish.

"Leave off the gab," said a burly sailor. Clapping his private tankard—a thing of enormous dimensions—fairly over the little head of the challenger, he snuffed him completely and suddenly lifted him bodily to the top of the bar, amid the guffaws of the entire company.

Rust lost no time in arousing Halberd, whom he herded to the apartments aloft with brief ceremony.

Wainsworth, who had been sitting up in his room, writing letters while he waited for Adam's return, now

heard his friend coming and opened his door to bid him welcome. With another big hand-shake, and a smile over their recent mis-encounter, the two went into the lighted apartment, Wainsworth closing the door behind him.

"It's a wonder you find me anything more than a small heap of ashes," said Wainsworth, "for I have fairly burned and smoked with my eagerness to see you back."

"I can smell the smoke," said Adam. "How very like tobacco it is. And now that I am here I presume you are quite put out."

"You are not in love or your wits would be as dull as mine," his friend replied. "But sit down, sit down, and tell me all about yourself."

"I thought you wanted to do the telling."

"Well, I do, confound you, but——"

"What's all this?" interrupted Adam. He had caught sight, on the table, of two glittering heaps of money, English coins, piled in two apparently equal divisions on the cloth.

"That? Oh, nothing, your share and mine," said Wainsworth, taking Adam's hat and sweeping one of the heaps into its maw with utter unconcern. "Stow it away and be seated."

"Well, but——" started Rust.

"Stow it, stow it!" interrupted Wainsworth. "I didn't bother you with buts and whyfores when you divided with me. I have something of more importance to chat about."

"This is ten times as much as I gave to you," objected Adam, doggedly.

"You gave me ten times more than you kept yourself, when it meant ten times as great a favor. I am mean enough only to divide even," answered Wainsworth. "Say anything more about it, and I shall pitch my share out of the window."

As a matter of fact, Rust had impoverished himself for this friend, when in England, at a moment most vital in Wainsworth's career. He had no argument, therefore, against accepting this present, much-needed capital. He placed the clinking coins in his pocket, not without a sense of deep obligation to his friend. It made one more bond between them, cementing more firmly than ever that affectionate regard between them, on the strength of which either would have made a great personal sacrifice for the other. No sooner, however, had Adam cleared his hat and weighted his clothing with the money, than he realized that the only good argument he had possessed to oppose to Captain Phipps' scheme to take him away from Boston, namely, his poverty, was now utterly nullified. He started as if to speak, but it was already too late. If the Captain found him out, what could he say or do?

"Now then," said Wainsworth, "we can talk."

"I am an empty urn, waiting to be filled with your tales and confessions," said Adam.

Wainsworth settled back in his chair and stroked his small imperial, hung on his under lip. "Yes, we can talk," he repeated. He sat upright again, and once more leaned backward. "I don't know where to begin," he admitted.

"You might start off by saying you're in love."

"Who told you I'm in love? I haven't said so.

You'd be in love yourself, if ever you had met her. She's a beauty, Adam! She's divine! She's glorious! Odds walruses, you'd be clean crazy about her! Why, you would simply rave—you couldn't be as calm as I am if you knew her, Adam! She's the loveliest, sweetest, most heavenly angel that ever walked the earth! Why, I can't give you an idea! She,—she, she just takes your breath! There is nothing in Boston like her—nothing in the world. Why, man, you couldn't sit still if you had ever seen her!" He got up and paced the room madly. "You could no more sit there and tell me about her as I am telling you than you could drink the ocean!"

"No, I suppose I couldn't."

"Of course you couldn't. I'm an older man than you are—a whole year older—and I know what I am talking about. You would go raving mad, if you saw her. She is the most exquisite—Adam! She's peerless!"

"Then you are in love?" said Adam. "Up to this last moment I thought there might be some doubts about it, but I begin to suspect perhaps you are."

"Love? In love? My dear boy, you don't know what love is! I adore her! I worship her! I would lay down my life for her! I would die ten thousand deaths for her, and then say I loved her still!"

"That would be a remarkable post-mortem power of speech," said Adam. "And I suppose she loves you as fervently as you love her."

"Of course she does—that is,—now, now why would you ask such a silly question as that? A love like mine just reaches forth and surrounds her; and it couldn't

do that if she didn't—well, you know how those things are."

"Oh, certainly. If she loves you and you love her, that makes it complete, and as I am a bit tired, and this leaves no more to be said——"

"But there is more to be said! Why don't you ask me some questions?"

"Silly questions?"

"No! Of course not! Some plain, common-sense questions."

"Well, then, is she beautiful?"

"Odds walruses, Adam, she is the most beautiful girl that ever breathed. She surpasses rubies and diamonds and pearls. She eclipses——"

"Ah, but is she lovely?"

"Lovely?—She's a dream of loveliness. I wish you could see her! You would throw stones at your grandmother, if you could see how lovely she is. Lovely!—Can't you invent some better word—something that means more? Lovely doesn't express it. Go on, go on, ask me something more!"

"Oh, well, is she pretty or plain?"

"She is most radiantly beautiful.—Look here, Adam, you think I am an ass."

"My dear old fellow, I didn't stop to think."

"You are making fun of me!"

"Impossible, Henry. You told me to ask you some simple questions. Does she live here in Boston?"

"She does, of course she does, or I shouldn't be here, should I? She lives here and Boston has become my Heaven!"

"Oh, well, thanks for your hospitality. Let's see,—

is she beauti—but I may have asked that before.” He yawned and rubbed his eyes to keep them open. “Oh, I do think of another. What is her name?”

“Her name?” chuckled Wainsworth, walking up and down in an ecstasy of delight. “Her name is the prettiest name in the universe. It’s Garde—Garde Merrill—Garde! Oh, you just love to say Garde, Garde, Garde!”

Adam started, suddenly awake and alert. He passed his hand across his eyes stiffly. His face became as pale as paper. Wainsworth was still walking restlessly up and down, intent on his own emotions.

“It’s a name like a perfume,” he went on. “Garde, Garde. You can’t think how that name would cling to a man’s memory for years—how it rings in a man’s brain—how it plays upon his soul!”

Adam was thinking like lightning. Garde!—She loved Wainsworth—he had said so. It was this that had made her appear so restrained, unnatural, eager to return to the house. This was why her answers had been so evasive. The whole situation broke in on him with a vividness that stunned his senses.

A mad thought chased through his brain. It was that, if he had spoken first, this moment of insupportable pain could have been avoided, but that Wainsworth having spoken first had acquired rights, which he, as a friend, loving him dearly, would be bound to respect. He thought of the money he had just accepted from this brother-like friend. He saw the impossibility of ever saying to Henry that he too loved Garde Merrill—had loved her for seven years—had heard her name pealing like the bell of his own very being in his soul!

But no—he couldn't have spoken ! He knew that. He would never dare to say that she loved him, in return for the love he had fostered for her, these seven years. No, he could not have spoken of her like this to any soul, under any circumstances. To him her name was too precious to be pronounced above a whisper to his own beating heart. He did not realize that, by that very token of her sacredness to him, he loved her far more deeply, far more sublimely than could any man who would say her name over and over and babble of his love.

He only knew that his brain was reeling. He could only see that Wainsworth, for whom he would have sacrificed almost anything, was all engrossed in this love which must mean so much. He only realized that all at once he had lost his right to tell this dearly beloved friend the truth, and with this he had also lost the right, as an honorable comrade, to plead his own soul's yearning at the door of Garde's heart.

Wainsworth, in his ecstatic strolling and ringing of praises, was tolling a knell for Adam, saying "Garde" and then "Garde" and again presently "Garde," which was the only word, in all his rapid talk that reached the other's ears.

Adam arose, unsteadily. Wainsworth had not observed his well-concealed agitation.

"I—must be going," said Rust, huskily, turning his face away from the light. He tried to feign another yawn. "I am no longer good company. Good night."

"What, going?" said Henry, catching him affectionately by the shoulders. "Ah, Adam, I suppose I am a bit foolish, but forgive me. You don't know

what it is to love as I have learned to love. And, dear friend, it has made me love you more—if possible—than ever."

"Good night, Henry," said Adam, controlling his voice with difficulty. "Good night—and God bless you."

"Say 'God bless Mistress Garde Merrill'—for my sake," said Henry.

Adam looked at him oddly and repeated the words like a mere machine.

CHAPTER VI.

PAN'S BROTHER AND THE NYMPH.

ADAM returned to his room attempting to pucker his lips for a careless whistle which failed to materialize. He had evolved a rude but logical philosophy of his own for every phase of life ; but what philosophy ever fooled the maker thereof, with its sophistries ?

The beef-eaters were snoring so ominously that Adam was constrained to think of two volcanoes threatening immediate eruptions.

“ Poor old boys ! ” he said to himself. There was no particular reason for this, save that he felt he must pity something, and self-pity he abhorred. He was trying not to think of the one companion that always drew his emotions out of his reluctant heart and gave them expression—his violin.

Standing in the middle of the floor, without a light in the room, he reasoned with himself. He said to his inner being that doubtless Wainsworth loved her more than he did anyway ; that he, Adam, having carried away a boyish memory, which he had haloed with romanticism for seven years, could not call his emotions love. Moreover, he had as yet only seen her in the dark, and might not be at all attracted by her true self in the daylight. Naturally, also, Wainsworth had as much right in the premises as any man on earth, and

no man could expect a girl to remember a mere homely lad for seven years and know that he loved her, or that he thought he did, and so reciprocate the affection and calmly await his return. Clearly he was an absurd creature, for he had fostered some silly notion in his heart, or brain, that Garde was feeling toward him, all these years, as he felt toward her. It was fortunate he had found everything out so soon. The thing to do now was to think of something else.

All the while he was thus philosophizing, he had a perfect subconsciousness that told him the violin would win—that soon or late it would drag his feelings out of him, in its own incomparable tones. He only paused there arguing the matter because he hated to give in without a fight. That violin always won. It must not be permitted to arrogate to itself an absolute mastery over his moods.

Presently, beginning to admit that he would yet have to tuck the instrument under his chin, whether or no, he worked out a compromise. He would not play it, or sound it, or fondle it in the town. If it wanted to voice things and would do it—well, he would carry it out into the woods.

Feeling that he had, in a measure, conquered, Rust stole silently across the apartment to the corner in which he had placed the violin with his own loving hands, lifted the case without making a sound and crept out as if he had been a thief, pressing the box somewhat rigidly against his heart.

He reached the street without difficulty. The town was asleep. A dog barking, a mile away, and then a foolish cock, crowing because he had waked, were the

only sounds breaking over all Boston. The last thin rind of the moon had just risen. In the light it cast, the houses and shadows seemed but a mystic painting, in deep purple, blacks and grays. Silently as Adam could walk, these houses caught up the echo of his footfalls, and whispered it on, from one to another, as if it had been a pass-word to motionless sentinels.

He came to the Common, discerning Beacon Hill, dimly visible, off to the right. With grass under foot he walked more rapidly. Past the watch-house and the powder-house, in the center of the Common, he strode, on to Fox Hill and then to the Roxbury Flats, stretching wide and far, to the west of the town.

Being now far from all the houses, alone in an area of silence, Adam modified his gait. He even stood perfectly still, listening, for what he could not have heard, gazing far away, at scenes and forms that had no existence. Night and solitude wrought upon him to make him again the boy who had lived that free, natural existence with the Indians. His tongue could not utter, his imagination could not conceive, anything concrete or tangible out of the melancholy ecstasy which the night aroused in his being and which seemed to demand some outward response from his spirit. He felt as if inspiration, to say something, or to do something, were about to be born in his breast, but always it eluded him, always it was just beyond him and all he could do, as his thought pursued it, was to dwell upon the sublimity breathing across the bosom of Nature and so fairly into his face.

He had come away without his hat. Bareheaded, at times with his eyes closed, the better to appreciate the

earth in its slumber, he fairly wantoned in the coolness, the sweetness and the beauty of the hour. Thus it was past three o'clock in the morning when at length he came to the woods.

Man might build a palace of gold and brilliants, or Nature grow an edifice of leaves all resplendent with purples, reds, yellows and emeralds, but, when night spread her mantle, these gems of color and radiance might as well be of ebon. It is the sun that gilds, that burnishes, that lays on the tints of the mighty canvas; and when he goes, all color, all glitter and all beauty, save of form, have ceased to be.

Adam saw the trees standing dark and still, their great black limbs outstretched like arms, with upturned hands, suppliant for alms of weather. There was something brotherly in the trees, toward the Indians, Adam thought, and therefore they were his big brothers also. He had even seen the trees retreating backward to the West, as the Red men had done, falling before the march of the great white family.

If Nature has aught of awe in her dark hours, she keeps it in the woods. The silence, disturbed by the mystical murmuring of leaves, the reaching forth of the undergrowth, to feel the passer-by in the depth of shadows, the tangled roots that hold the wariest feet until some small animal—like a child of the forest—can scamper away to safety, all these things make such a place seem sentient, breathing with a life which man knows not of, but feels, when alone in its midst.

To Adam all these things betokened welcome. His mood became one of peculiar exultation, almost, but not quite, cheer. As a discouraged child might say,

"I don't care, my mother loves me, anyway, whether anybody else does or not," so Adam's spirit was feeling, "If there is no one else to love me, at least I am loved by the trees."

With this little joy at his heart, he penetrated yet a bit further into the absolute darkness, and sitting down upon a log, which had given his shins a hearty welcome, he removed his violin from its case and felt it over with fond hands and put its smooth cheek against his own cheek, before he would go on to the further ecstasy which his musical embrace became when he played to tell of his moods.

"Now something jolly, my Mistress," he said to the instrument, as if he had doubts of the violin's intentions. "Don't be doleful."

Like a fencer, getting in a sharp attack, to surprise the adversary at the outset, he jumped the bow on to the strings with a brisk, debonair movement that struck out sparks of music, light and low as if they were played for fairies. It was a sally which soon changed for something more sober. It might have seemed that the fencer found a foe worthy his steel and took a calmer method in the sword-play. Then a moment later it would have appeared that Adam was on the defensive.

As a matter of fact, it was next to impossible for Rust to play bright, lively snatches of melody, this night, try as he might. The long notes, with the quality of a wail in them, got in between the staccato sparkles. When Adam thought of the Indians, their minor compositions transmitted themselves through his fingers into sound, before he was aware. He had braced him-

self stiffly on philosophy all the way to this forest-theater, but to little avail. He presently stopped playing altogether.

"If he loves her and she loves him," he told himself, resolutely, "why, then, it is much better that two should be happy than that all three should finally be made miserable by some other arrangement, which a man like me, in his selfishness, might hope to make. It's a man's duty, under such circumstances, to dance at the wedding and be a jolly chap, and—hunt around for another girl."

He attacked the violin again, when it was apparently off guard, and rattled off a cheerful ditty before the instrument could catch its breath, so to speak. Then a single note taunted him with a memory, and the violin nearly sobbed, for a second, till the jig could recover its balance. The strings next caught at a laggard phrase and suddenly bore in a relentless contemplation of the future and its barren promise. The brighter tones died away again. So went the battle.

Trying his best to compel the violin to laugh and accept the situation, while the instrument strove to sigh, Adam played an odd composition of alternating sadness and careless jollity, the outpouring being the absolute speech of his soul.

He played on and on. Inasmuch as his philosophy was as right as any human reasoning is likely to be, Adam's more cheerful nature won. But the victory was not decided, no more than it was permanent. Yet he was at last the master of the situation.

Heedless of the time as he had been, in his complete absorption, Rust had not observed the coming of morn-

ing. Nevertheless the sun was up, and between the branches of the trees it had flung a topaz spot of color at his feet—a largess of light and warmth. Without thinking about it, or paying any attention to it, Adam had fixed his eyes on this patch of gold.

Suddenly his senses became aware that the spot had been blotted out of existence. He looked up and beheld a vision of loveliness—as fair a nymph as ever enjoyed a background of trees.

It was Garde.

CHAPTER VII.

THE MEETING IN THE GREENWOOD.

WITH her glorious mahogany-colored hair loose in masses on her shoulders, with her eyes inquiring, and her lips slightly parted as she stole forward, thrilled with the exquisite beauty of Adam's playing, in such a temple of perfect harmonies, Garde appeared like the very spirit of the forest, drawn from sacred bowers by the force of love that vibrated the instrument's strings.

No bark of pine tree was browner than her eyes ; no berries were redder than her lips, nor the color that climbed upward in her cheeks, the white of which was as that of the fir beneath its outer covering. As some forest dryad, maidenly and diffident, she held her hand above her heart when Adam looked up and discovered her presence.

The man leaped to his feet, like one startled from sleep. It almost seemed as if a dream had brought him this radiant figure. No word came, for a moment, to his lips.

"Why—it's you !" said Garde.

"Garde !—Miss—Mistress Merrill !" said Adam, stammering. "By my hilt, I—the—the wonder is 'tis you."

"Not at all," corrected Garde, recovering something that passed for composure. "I come here frequently,

to gather herbs and simples for Goody Dune, but for you to be here, and playing—like that——”

“Yes,” agreed Adam, when he had waited in vain for her to finish, “perhaps it is an intrusion. You—you came away from the town early.”

“Why did you come here to play?” she asked. Her own nature so yearned over the forest and things beautiful, her own emotions were so wrought upon by the sublimity of earth’s chancels of silence, that she felt her soul longing for its kindred companion, who must be one reverent, yet joyous, where Nature ruled. She wanted Adam to pour forth the tale of his brotherhood with the trees and the loneliness of his heart, that would make him thus to play in such a place and at such a time. While she looked at him, the love she had fostered from her childhood was matured in one glorious blush that welled upward from her bosom to her very eyes themselves.

Adam had looked at her but once. It was a long look, somewhat sad, as of one parting with a dear companion. In that moment he had known how wholly and absolutely he loved her. His pretended doubts of the night before had fled as with the darkness. The daylight in her eyes and on her face had made him henceforth a sun-worshiper, since the sun revealed her in such purity of beauty.

In the great delight which had bounded in his breast at seeing her there, he had momentarily forgotten his conversation with Wainsworth. When she asked him why he had come to the woods, he would fain have knelt before her, to speak of his love, to tell of his anguish and to plead his cause, by every leap of his heart,

but he had remembered his friend and his old Indian schooling in stoicism gathered upon him, doubtless for the very presence of the firs and pines, so solemn and Indianesque about him. He put on a mask he had worn over melancholy often.

“Why, I came here for practise, of which I am sadly in need,” he said. “When once I played before King Pirate and his court of buccaneers, I was like to be hung for failing, after a mere six hours of steady scraping at the strings. If you came for simples, verily you have found a simple performer and simple tunes.”

Garde was painfully disappointed in him. His flippancy had, as he intended it should, deceived her. She shut that little door of her heart through which her soul had been about to emerge, ready to reveal itself to and to speak welcome to its mate. She did not cease to love him, emotional though she was, for love is like a tincture, or an attar,—once it is poured out, not even an ocean of water can so dilute it as to leave no trace of its fragrance, and not until the last drop in the ocean is drained can it all be removed or destroyed. No, she was pained. She desired to retreat, to take back the overture which, to her mind, had been a species of abandon of her safeguards and so patent that she could not conceive that Adam had failed to note its significance. Yet she gave him up for a soulless Pan reluctantly. That playing, which had drawn her, psychically, physically, irresistibly to his side, could have no part with things flippant. It had been to her like a heart-cry, which it seemed that her heart alone could answer. And when she had found that it was Adam playing—her Adam—she had with difficulty

restrained herself from running to him and sobbing out the ecstasy suddenly awakened within her. The memory of the music he had made was still upon her and she was timidly hopeful again when she said :

“How long have you been practising here ?”

Adam mistook this for a little barb of sarcasm. His mind was morbid on the subject of Wainsworth and of Garde’s evasiveness of the evening before. He put on more of the motley.

“Not half long enough,” he said, “by the violence I still do to melody ; and yet too long by half, since I have frightened the birds from the forest. There is always too much of bad playing, but it takes much bad practising to make a good performer. I am better at playing a jig. Shall I try, in your honor ?”

“Thank you, if you please, no, I would rather you would not,” said Garde. It was her first Puritanical touch. If she had given him permission to play his jig, very many things might have been altered, for Adam would have revealed himself and would have opened her heart-doors once again, such a mastery over everything debonair in his nature would the violin have assumed, with its spell of deeper emotions, inevitable—with Garde so near.

Adam laughed, well enough to appear careless. “I commend your judgment,” he said, “though I have always thought, even after last night,—ah, by the way, where is your companion, Mistress Prudence somebody ?”

He had parried his own tendency to get back to the tender subjects and memories flooding his heart, but not in a manner to gladden Garde. Indeed, the ring of

artificiality in everything he said made her less and less happy.

“Her name is Prudence Soam. She is my cousin, and she is at home,” said Garde, quietly. “If you would care to see her again, I will tell her of your wish.” She could readily understand how any one might like Prudence, knowing what a sweet, good girl her cousin was, but it caused her an acute pain to think she had cherished the image of Adam in her heart for seven years, only to find now that he had been inconstant.

She suddenly thought of the meeting of the evening before. Adam’s willingness to present her—in the presence of Prudence—with that something which he had brought her from his first trip to Hispaniola, appeared to her now in a light, not of his stupidity, but of his deliberate intention to show her that he had not preserved a sacred dream of their childhood friendship, as she had so fondly hoped he had. She even wondered if he might not have seen, known and cared for Prudence before. She concluded that he cared for Prudence now, and certainly not for herself. Then she thought he might think of that something, which he had wished so to give her—that something from Hispaniola,—and she feared he might present it to her now. This would have been too much to bear, under the circumstances.

Adam was indeed thinking on this very subject, but Wainsworth—his friend—arose like a specter in his meditations, and all that Garde had said had confirmed him in his belief of her coldness to himself, so that he preferred to seem to forget the trinket, which would have been at once the token of his love and constancy.

“Mistress Prudence Soam,” Adam repeated, replying

to Garde's last remarks. "Indeed I should be but a sorry clod, not to wish to see her again. Does she also come searching for simples?"

"No," replied Garde, a little dully. "But I thank you for reminding me that I must set about my task. Therefore I must bid you good day."

Adam thought something would snap inside his breast. There was the sunlight, streaming through the aisles of the trees; there was Garde, whom he loved beyond anything of earth, setting off alone when he should be at her side, culling her herbs, touching her hands as he gave her the aromatic leaves that he too knew so well, and looking into Paradise through her eyes, that had so danced when first he knew them. But what of Wainsworth? What of the honor of a friend to a friend?

"Good day," he echoed, with a mock gaiety that struck painfully on the ears of both. "I trust your quest will be as successful as I could wish your life to be happy."

He hesitated a moment, for it was hard to part thus. Garde had hoped he might volunteer to go along and carry the tiny basket she held on her arm, for a woman's love can never be so discouraged as not to have a new little hope every other moment that something may happen to set matters aright in spite of all. But Adam did not dare to prolong this test of his honor to Wainsworth. He felt that his head was reeling, but with a stately bow he took a final, lingering look at the sweetest vision he had ever seen, and started away.

Garde, steadied by her pride, returned his bow and walked further into the woods.

Adam felt that he must pause and turn ; that the "Garde !" that welled up from his heart would burst through his lips in spite of all he could do. With his violin clasped beneath his arm, however, he conquered himself, absolutely, and never so much as turned about again to see where the wood-nymph had gone.

But Garde could not so slay her dearest impulse. She turned before she had gone ten steps. Looking back, she saw Adam, bareheaded, crowned by his golden ringlets,—through which the sunbeams were thrust like fingers of gilt,—trailing his sword, clutching his violin, striding off in his boots as lithely as a panther and bearing up under his faded brown coat as proudly as a king.

"Oh, Adam !" she said, faintly, but he was already too far away to hear the little wood-note which her voice had made.

He disappeared. She knew he would soon be clear of the trees. Reluctantly at first, and then eagerly, though silently, she flitted along from tree to tree, where he had gone, till at length she came to the edge of the forest.

Adam, heavy with Wainsworth's gold, was walking less buoyantly now. He was far out on the flat, heading southward, not exactly toward Boston. Garde watched him yearningly, going, going and never once looking backward to where he had left her.

She could bear no more. She sank down on the moss at the foot of a tree, and leaning against the gnarled old trunk, she covered her face with her hands and cried, heart-brokenly.

Had she watched but a moment longer, she would

have seen Adam halt, slowly turn about, and with his hand at his lips gaze toward the woods steadily for fully a minute. Then with a slow gesture he waved a kiss back to where she was and once more went upon his way.

The man had no mind to walk through Boston in daylight, with his violin naked in his hands. Keeping therefore southward, he came at length to the upper part of the harbor. Here he engaged a boatman with a sloop to convey him down to the ship-yard of Captain William Phipps.

The worthy ship-builder soon made him welcome.

"William," said Adam, "I have replenished the treasury, as I said I might, and I have made up my mind to join you in your treasure-hunting expedition."

CHAPTER VIII.

PAYING THE FIDDLER.

ASSUME a cheerfulness, if you have it not, and it may presently grow upon you. This happened to Adam, so that when he left Captain Phipps, to return to the tavern for his breakfast and to seek out the beef-eaters, his mood was almost volatile again. There is much virtue in having something other than one's troubles to think upon. The sunken treasure afforded Adam a topic.

He made his way to his apartments in the Crow and Arrow by the stairs at the rear. He found the rooms empty. Beef-eaters, bag and baggage were gone. Even the violin-case was not to be found.

Somewhat surprised that his faithful followers would so desert him, or at least move the family habitation without consulting their comrade, and on notice so brief, Rust knocked on Wainsworth's door, to ask him if he had seen anything of the worthy Pike and Halberd. But Wainsworth too was out.

Upon proceeding post haste down to the tap-room, Adam broke in upon a scene of armistice, after a first shock of war. Standing at bay, with drawn swords, the shabby chattels of the trio in a corner behind them, were the beef-eaters, confronting and defying the landlord and several valiant citizens, in the midst of whom

was the small individual who had so much desired to fight, on the previous evening, and who was now haranguing the opposing forces volubly.

“Here comes the master-vagabond now!” he cried, the moment Adam appeared in the room. “Now, sirs, for your proof that you are not a pack of wandering beggars and braggarts!”

“At last!” cried Halberd and Pike, together, coming quickly forward to grasp their comrade in arms by the hands.

“We have defended your good name and possessions!” said Pike.

“We have flung the lie into the teeth of these varlets!” added Halberd. “You have come in good time.”

“What’s the meaning of all this business?” demanded Adam, of the assembled company.

Every one started to talk or to shout at once. Adam heard such things as :

“They have called you and us a lot of penniless beggars and pirates!”

“What are you but a swaggering bully?”

“You are a fiddling limb of Satan!”

The landlord said, more moderately, “I did but desire to protect my house in its good repute.”

The fierce little white-eyed man waved both his fists.

“These dogs,” he snapped to Adam, “have boasted that you are loaded down with gold!”

“Yes, they mentioned gold,” said the landlord, tentatively.

“Gold?” said Adam. “Is it a crime to have no gold? How much gold would you see?” he pulled

his two hands from his pockets and scattered heaps of yellow sovereigns on the table.

The beef-eaters nearly collapsed with amazement, at the sight of this wealth. The landlord fell to rubbing his hands with ecstasy.

"You unseemly traducers of fair gentlemen," he said, with virtuous indignation, to the belligerents behind him, "how dare you come here to insult and to villify my guests?"

"He probably stole it," cried the incorrigible little white-eyed terrier. "He has naught to do but to make God-fearing men—and his betters, at that—dance against their will in the public streets!"

"Ah," said Adam, striding forward and purposely bending with great show of looking down to where the little man was standing, "so you have come to pay the fiddler for the sport which your friend enjoyed yesterday evening? How little he reckons my fiddling worth. This is so sad that nothing short of a breakfast can console me. Landlord——"

"Braggart! knave!" cried the little man, interrupting. "I offer to fight you again! You dare not fight!"

The smaller the dog the rarer the punishments and the larger the arrogance.

"Shatter my hilt!" said Adam, "you and another gnat would devour me whole."

Without warning, and yet gently, Rust took him by the collar, twirled him about so that he could lay his other hand on the trousers of the midget, and hoisting him off his feet, though he kicked and made a disturbance with yelling and raving, carried him at once to

the open window of the tavern and dropped him out, on the sidewalk beneath.

Three or four partisans, who had backed up little white-eyes and the landlord, now edged toward the door. Adam made one motion in their direction and they got out with becoming alacrity.

“ Lock that door till we have had our breakfast,” Rust commanded.

The landlord had no more than complied, than the little rat, dropped from the window, came banging against the barrier on the outside, demanding admittance vociferously.

“ Who is yon whiffet ? ” Adam asked.

“ His name is Psalms Higgler,” laughed the landlord, with fine hypocrisy. “ How bravely you served him, and rightly too.” He rubbed his hands gleefully.

“ And his friend who sent him hither, he that danced so divertingly, what may be his name ? ”

“ Isaiah Pinchbecker, you doubtless mean. And what will you have for breakfast, sire ? ”

“ I will have you carry my bales of merchandise back to my apartments,” said Adam, who did not propose to move out of the house until he felt inclined, preferring to remain there and command respect for himself and the beef-eaters, even while he knew that the landlord had joined the miserable snappers at his heels. “ And look to it you move smartly and return to order something to eat.”

The landlord, spurred by the sight of the gold, and eager to make all possible amends for the errors of judgment he had committed, staggered up the stairs, panting like a grampus.

Adam now turned to his comrades, who recited three times over the incidents of the morning, which consisted chiefly of the charges made by Psalms Higglar, evidently at the instigation of Pinchbecker—the nimble-footed—and which had so nearly culminated in their expulsion from the tavern.

Tempest in a teapot as it had been, the business was an indication of feelings which went as deep as politics, in which the whole colony had been simmering for years. Moreover, the incident was not yet concluded.

The same year which had witnessed King Philip's war, at the close of which Adam had gone away, one of the greatest mischief-makers with whom the Colonists had ever been called upon to deal, Edward Randolph, had come to Boston with a design to despoil the colony of its charter. He had worked openly, in some directions, secretly in others. He had enlisted malcontents, dissenters-from-everything, hypocrites and men with private greeds, in his Tory following. Among these were Pinchbecker, his friend, the landlord of the Crow and Arrow, Psalms Higglar and many others of their ilk.

Now Pinchbecker came under the category of hypocrites. He assumed the Puritans' manners, speech and customs, and did, in fact, despise some of the looser habits of the Royalists, though he was their willing tool, working for future favor and gain. He had therefore felt himself sorely aggrieved when compelled to his dance, in a public highway, and having first egged on his little terrier, Psalms, had then repaired to Edward Randolph, himself, for redress of his wrongs.

Randolph, thinking he smelt a bluff and ready Tory

lot, in Adam, and his company, found occasion to visit the tavern without delay. He arrived while Rust and the beef-eaters were still at their breakfast. He entered the house at the rear and ordered a drink at the bar.

Motioning the landlord to silence, that worthy being much astonished to see him so early, Randolph presently turned about, as if he had not before observed the trio at table.

"Gentlemen," he said, "I drink ill when I drink alone; will you not permit me to order something in which you can join me?"

Adam looked up. "Thank you," he said, "it is our misfortune to have ordered, just as you were coming in."

"The misfortune is mine," insisted Randolph. He drank alone.

Rust had taken in the visitor's details at a glance. The man was of medium size and nervous temperament. He had a great brow, heavy with perceptive faculties, at the expense of those of reflection. His eyes were deep-set, round, intense and close together, the nose that divided them being as thin and curved as a beak. His lips were thin and tight-shutting. He looked like a human bird-of-prey.

"By your dress and manner you are recently from England," said the man, sauntering leisurely toward Adam, when he had smacked his lips and set down his mug.

"By your courtesy," said Adam, "you are a student, curious to know your fellow-beings."

Randolph laughed. "Curious?" said he. "You do me wrong. I care neither who nor what a gentleman is, so long as he is witty and blest with humor. Your

repute and the tale of your love for dancing have preceded you, sir. I confess I was tempted to come here and see you."

"I beseech you for an opportunity to say that I was merely charitable," said Rust. "I ordered the dance to amuse my beef-eaters. Perhaps you are a dancer yourself?"

Randolph bit his lip. He was not getting on to his liking. He smiled, however, and said :

"I have few graces, after I have mentioned a sense of admiration——"

"And blandishment," put in Adam, who frankly disliked the man.

"Say appreciation, rather," corrected Randolph. "I have had a hearty laugh over that dance. I wish I had been there to see it; such merriment is so rare in Massachusetts."

"Nearly as rare as introductions between gentlemen," Adam answered.

He tipped up his mug and drank the last of his brew carelessly. Randolph turned red with anger. His gray eyes looked like cold fire, yet he was still unwilling to accept defeat in his effort to find out the bent of Adam's political views.

"We live in a time when the stoutest friends and companions in good causes might be lost to each other by formality," he said, with a smile doing its best to bend his features. "I must beg your pardon, if I seem——"

He was interrupted by the entrance, at this moment, of William Phipps, who came in at the door which the landlord had quietly unbolted.

“What, Adam, not yet done with eating?” he called out, bluntly. “Come, come, I have been waiting this long time for you and your friends to have a look over the brig.”

“With you at once,” rejoined the rover.

He and the beef-eaters knocked over their heavy chairs and stools, as they arose from the table. Phipps looked at Randolph. The two men nodded, distantly and somewhat frowningly. Without so much as glancing at Randolph, Adam and his retinue walked to the door and so away, with the Captain.

Randolph needed no further intimation of Adam’s probable leanings, politically, than this obvious camaraderie with Phipps—who was a patriot as immovable and staunch as a rock fortress. He clenched his fists and ground his molars savagely.

“Curse the young fool!” he said. “I’ll make him wish for a civil tongue to be hung in his head!”

CHAPTER IX.

A MATTER OF STATE.

MISTRESS GARDE MERRILL, having several hours before delivered her simples and aromatic leaves to old Goody Dune, just outside the limits of the town, stood looking out of the window, at her Uncle John Soam's home, where she was visiting. Thus it was that she saw her grandfather, David Donner enter the gate. Two minutes afterward she beheld the unusual sight of three Governors come into the garden together.

The first was ex-Governor Leverett, that stern old Roundhead, the ex-Captain of Cromwell's horse. At his side was Governor Winslow, up from Plymouth, on grave affairs. Behind them was an older man, and perhaps a wiser one, Governor Simon Bradstreet, still hale and hearty after fifty-three years of service to the colonies.

Bringing up the rear of the little procession was Henry Wainsworth, private secretary to Leverett. He looked toward the windows in the hope of seeing Garde, but that young lady stepped silently back into the shadows, for she had no desire to be seen.

Neither David Donner nor the other visitors came to the house, nor even to the front door thereof. It was a fine day, so that the garden seemed all smiles. A cow was mooing lustily and chickens were singing in

their contentment. These sounds were interspersed with the hawing of a saw, and then with hammer strokes, these latter disturbances issuing from a newly constructed granary and cow-shed which John Soam, Garde's uncle, had recently afforded.

David Donner, who had known that he would find Goodman Soam in this shed, had tracked across the garden without ceremony. The governors and Wainsworth, having confidence that Donner knew what he was doing, followed where he led, to the center whence the clatter of industry proceeded.

The hammer-pounding had abated nothing, nor did it cease when the three grave citizens and Wainsworth had entered the house and ranged themselves silently beside David Donner, to whom they could not well speak for the din. They nodded to their friend, however, and looked up, like students of astronomy all of one mind, at Goodman Soam above them.

John Soam had never been reputed a carpenter of talent in Boston. However, here he was, standing on the head of a barrel and obviously completing the task of ceiling this room of the granary, for his head, shoulders and arms were out of sight, in the darksome region above the ceiling, while part of his body and his legs, below, moved in vigorous jerks as he pounded into place and nailed what appeared to be the last board but one which would be needed to complete the job on which he was so commendably engaged.

It seemed to his visitors that they had never before seen Goodman Soam in so tight an orifice as was the one from which he now protruded. They waited in patience for the nailing to cease, conversation being im-

possible meantime. John was, by all reckoning, a thorough workman, for he drove home nail after nail, without ceasing for so much as a breath.

At length the board was secured to the carpenter's satisfaction, for he ceased to hammer and could be heard to feel his work lovingly as he examined its beauties in the half light in which he had labored.

"Good morrow, John Soam," now said Governor Leverett, having first coughed behind his hand. "Here are several fellow-townsmen come to your place."

John was seen to give a squirm. "Oh, good morrow," said he, his voice muffled by the ceiling between him and his friends. "I have been doing a little work. Wait a moment, good friend, till I may gather my nails and tools."

The five good men waited, hearing John scramble the nails together with a few metallic clinks.

"We went first to your house, David," said John Winslow to David Donner. "We came to see you and John Soam, as promised, on a matter of some gravity."

John Soam now, upon making an effort to retreat out of the slender orifice which he had left when he nailed in his board, found his chest and shoulders thicker than his waist. He wriggled. This being of no avail to extricate him, he struggled. A convulsion of activity then seized upon him. He attempted to sit down, he dragged at himself, he began to do unseemly things. But he could not get out. He had hammered in his own head and arms, with many good nails in the board.

His friends below him now overheard a sound which, in a simian, if simians talked at all, would have been a curse. John wrestled as if demons, expert in catch-

as-catch-can, were restraining him up there in the attic. He kicked about, with a violence so great as to overthrow the barrel whereon he had been standing. For a second his two blind feet felt about for his whilom support in an agony of helplessness.

"Goodman Leverett," he then bawled, in tones of repressed emotion, "will you put back that barrel for a moment, till I may come down?"

"If you will constrain your legs to seemly conduct, I will," said the governor. He and David Donner having received a kick apiece, now reinstated Goodman Soam's pedestal.

John became quiescent for a moment. His friends shifted about, uneasily.

"May we help you in any respect, John?" inquired Winslow.

"Are you fastened in?" added Simon Bradstreet.

"Might we not pull him down?" suggested Wainsworth.

"My friends, how many be you?" said the hot, muffled voice of John.

"Five," said one of the solemn governors. "Shall we give you a little assistance?"

"It would only be a little I should want," said the carpenter, dropping the nails he had clung to in desperation.

The five gentlemen disposed themselves about John's anatomy and pulled at his legs with united strength, grasping the cloth of his trousers for the purpose.

"Enough! enough!" roared John, after a moment of hopeless pain and wriggling.

His warning came belated. His trousers were of

good stuff enow, but trousers have their limitations. They parted, slightly above the uneven line of gripping hands, and came away in ragged banners.

The five citizens were horrified. So was John. Two of the gentlemen, with the booty taken from their friend, fell heavily to the floor.

"Dear me, this was most uncalled for," said David Donner.

John Soam tried to draw his legs up under his coat, vainly. He made terrible sounds of anguish, in his nakedness below and his loneliness up above the ceiling. His fellow-citizens, undecided as to whether they should go outside, for the sake of modesty, or remain and lend further aid to John, looked at one another inquiringly.

"John," then said Leverett, somewhat sternly, "would you council us to get an ax and knock out the board you have hammered into place?"

"Yes," bawled the carpenter, "there be two axes in the corner. Let them both be employed!"

"I have chopped down a tree in my youth," said David Donner.

He therefore took one of the axes, while Governor Winslow took the second.

They were then at a loss to reach the ceiling, wherefore it became necessary for the good men to build up a platform, of boxes and boards, while John Soam's legs tried to hide, one behind the other.

The platform being hastily constructed, the ax-men mounted and began to swing ill-directed blows upward at the stubborn board which the carpenter had hammered in so thoroughly.

No more than three blows had been delivered when John made protest, howling lustily for the purpose, as the ax-men failed at first to hear him, while busy with their work of salvation.

"It jars me rudely," he roared out, unable wholly to repress his feelings. "It's hellish."

"Ahem," said Governor Leverett. "What would you council us to do next, friend Soam?"

"Saw the board," counceled John. "It was a rare good fit, but it had best be sawed."

The platform was now changed and one after another the five citizens plied the saw, for the board was wet, and to saw above one's head is irksome in a high degree. Yet at length the cut was made, at one end, and those below could thrust the imprisoning plank upward. Being still stoutly nailed at the further end, the board scraped off some buttons, erstwhile sewn to John's waistcoat, and it otherwise harassed him before it was high enough to permit the carpenter to emerge from his attic. He appeared at last, however, red of countenance and in a fine condition to do some private blaspheming, had the opportunity been present for the exercise of this, man's inalienable function. His friends were immeasurably relieved to see him, safe.

"Friend John," said David Donner, "we have come hither on matters of state. When you are rehabilitated we shall, I believe, be glad of your further counsel."

CHAPTER X.

TO FOIL A SPY.

HIS friends, forming a hollow square, now escorted John to the house at a quick walk. He disappeared like a Jack into its box, when the door was finally opened, while the grave citizens entered the parlor and awaited his return. Clothed decorously once more, he was presently with them again, when the council of five, with Wainsworth sitting near, drew up to the heavy, oaken table.

They now listened to Governor Winslow, who had journeyed from Plymouth for this meeting.

"I have begun to lose hope," he said, "that we shall be able to postpone much longer the day of evil. We thought our charter was threatened ten or twelve years ago and we have held it by sheer power of procrastination and tactics of elusiveness, but Randolph has been with us here in Boston for seven years, and the harm he did to our independence in seventy-six has been accumulating interest in trouble for us, one might say, ever since. He has mastered our methods; he is closing in upon us every day. It is now a desperate case, requiring a desperate remedy. The only question is, what means can we undertake to offset some of the ill repute in which he has caused King Charles to hold us, and to nullify his further machinations."

"It would not be safe, would it, to expel the man Randolph from the colony?" said Leverett, who had first coughed behind his hand.

"Oh no," said Donner.

"Such an action would precipitate difficulties with the King," added Simon Bradstreet.

"And we would not dare to restrain him from further evil work?" John Soam inquired.

His friends shook their heads.

"We know well enough that he has gathered much testimony from persons willing to swear falsely, as to the grants to Gorges and Mason, in Maine and New Hampshire," said David Donner. "Might we not go over this same ground and procure true, sworn testimony and statements from more credible persons, with which to refute him?"

"That would have been well advised seven years ago," said Bradstreet, who had a way of tweaking his own nose when he began to speak, "but at that time we were still engrossed with, and alarmed by, the war with King Philip, and moreover we knew nothing of Randolph's methods. It would have done well then, but now it is too late—much too late—for that sort of work."

"I have thought upon the matter long and seriously," said Winslow. "I can see no way so good as to send an agent from among ourselves to England, to intercede with Charles and to plead our cause personally at the Court, day after day."

David Donner knew what was coming. He glared at an imaginary Stuart family.

John Soam said: "I can see the wisdom of such a

course. I consider that when Goodman Simon Bradstreet went to London before, he did this colony great service. That was—let me see—why, twenty-three good long years since. Are you of a mind to go once more, Friend Simon ? ”

“ I am an old man,” said Bradstreet, tweaking his nose with extra vigor. “ A younger wit would be of far more service.”

With his four score of years on his head Simon Bradstreet yet did injustice to his immortal youth and energy. The council knew that it was the gall and wormwood which he had manfully swallowed, twenty-three years before, when he went to Charles the Second to congratulate him upon his restoration to the throne, that wrought upon him now more than did the infirmities of age.

“ If we prove successful in finding an agent from among us, Friend Soam,” said Winslow, “ will you be one with us to find money for his pilgrimage ? ”

“ And whom would you have in mind ? ” John cautiously replied.

The governors turned with one accord to David Donner.

“ They have asked this service of me,” said David.

Leverett said : “ There is no one else so free, so gifted and so bountifully supplied with knowledge of these colonies. Nor is there any one among us whose comprehension of the intrigues and artifices employed by Randolph is so reliable.”

“ We have none among us more diplomatic and logical and yet adherent to the cause of truth,” added Winslow.

"I feel sure, David, you are the fittest man in Boston for this important undertaking," John Soam said, gravely.

"And we could count on you to furnish some of the necessary funds, if Donner will go, could we not?" asked Winslow, striking while the Soam iron was hot.

"You may, to be sure," John responded, more slowly. "But David has not yet indicated whether he will undertake this mission or no."

This was, indeed, the crucial point. Strict old Puritan that he was, despiser of ostentations, father already of that spirit of independence and Americanism being sown broadcast in New England, David Donner had already made many a wry face over the prospect of serving the colony by an expedient so bitter as he conceived this present task to be.

"I have debated this matter, since I had my first intimation of what to expect from Governor Winslow," he said, pursing up his mouth as if he were about to swallow a brew of hoarhound. "I am not a young man myself. I may never return to this land. But—if it is the prompting of your wisdom to send me, I cannot refuse to serve this colony and these earnest, toiling people."

Of the joy which his colleagues felt there was no sign apparent. For that matter, they would be as sad at losing Donner from their circle as they would be glad to send him on his mission. Their lives were made up of joyless duties, woven as a woof through a warp of joyless worship.

But among his hearers there was Wainsworth, and he was glad, not so much to have the severe old man

going abroad, as to know that Mistress Garde Merrill would now in all probability remain permanently with John Soam and his wife, who were good-natured, affectionate people. Indeed Mrs. Soam was a natural woman, more delighted when she was fostering or encouraging a mating, 'twixt youthful hearts, than she was when kneading dough into loaves that looked like fat, dimpled babies, and this is saying more than might readily be supposed.

Thus when, soon after, the meeting had broken up and the Governors had stiffly departed, it was but natural that Henry should discover, innocently enough, that he had left a bundle of papers behind. It was quite as natural, also, that upon returning and purposely knocking at the door of the family living-room, whereas the papers should have been still in the parlor, he should be admitted by Goodwife Soam and asked in most cordially, and sent with Garde to look for the truant documents.

CHAPTER XI.

DANGEROUS TRIBUTES.

ELOQUENT as Wainsworth had proved himself, in the presence of Adam, he was but an indifferent love's-man, now that he found himself alone with Garde.

"I wanted to come back for—for the papers," he stammered.

"Yes," said Garde, whose spirit of elfishness Henry always aroused, "they would soon have missed you sorely."

"Would they—What, papers?—Oh, you are making fun of——"

"I am making a search to find them," interrupted Garde. "Here they are. I am so sorry they have detained you."

"Thank you—oh, thank you," said Henry, still stumbling confusedly. "It is such a lovely day I thought I should like to come back and—and—and see—if I had really left them here."

"Yes, such a lovely day would make any one wish to do the same thing," said Garde, gravely. "Now that you have them, you must be very happy again."

"Yes, oh yes—no, no, the papers haven't made me happy."

"Then I am sorry you are sad," said Garde. "Per-

haps the lovely day outside will make you feel more joyous again."

"But I am not sad," protested Henry, getting momentarily redder. "I wanted to say—I wanted to come back——"

"Yes, you did say so, to get the papers."

"No—yes!—but I wanted to say——"

"That you had left them, because it was such a lovely day?"

"Yes, of course, but—no, no, I wanted to say—church!"

"Oh, they are church papers, Mr. Wainsworth?" asked Garde innocently.

"No, I—I wanted to say it is such a lovely day——"

"You have said so many things that you may have mentioned the day before." Garde's eyes were dancing, but he had hardly dared to look at her face, lest his tongue should fail him utterly.

He now fixed his attention on the table with all his power of will.

"I wanted to say, if the Sabbath is a lovely day, like this, may I not walk to meeting with you and David Donner?"

Piqued somewhat by the way Adam had treated her, Garde instantly saw a possible opportunity of arousing Adam's jealousy. He would doubtless attend meeting. He might see her with Henry. As Prudence would also be there, with her father, there might be further developments.

"If it is a lovely day, Mr. Wainsworth," she answered, "I think Granther Donner will be glad of your company, but if it is not a lovely day, Granther

and I will have to get along as best we may, alone, I suppose."

"No, I meant any sort of a day!" cried Wainsworth, desperately. "If the Sabbath is any sort of a day. I only said if it was as lovely as to-day because any day, would be a lovely day, if——" and there he stuck.

"If it were as lovely as to-day," Garde supplied.

"Yes," said Henry, hopelessly. "Then—then that is settled?"

"Do you mean the weather? It ought to be settled, I should think."

"No, I mean that I am to go with you and David Donner to meeting, no matter what sort of a day it is."

"I think Granther will be glad of your company," said Garde again. She led the way back to the living-room before Henry could frame any more of his tumble-down speeches."

Prudence and her mother were both here, now, and both looked up to smile at Wainsworth, whom they had grown to like for his evident sincerity. Mrs. Soam was a pleasant woman, with a double chin from which it seemed all manner of comfortable little chucklings of good-nature took their start. She should have been the mother of several boys, for she liked nice boys and felt a sense of motherhood over all she knew. Prudence was not at all like her mother. Her face was small and serious. She spoke with a quaint drawl. Although quite as old as Garde, she appeared so unsophisticated and childish, so quiet and unassertive that no one would have looked to find womanly emotions, in her breast.

"Well, Henry," said Mrs. Soam, who always called

“her boys” by their first names, “how have you been and what have you been doing? Have you heard from England recently? How was your mother, when you heard?”

“She was quite well, thank you,” said Henry, who could talk to Garde’s aunt without confusion, “but I have not heard from her recently. Oh—I nearly forgot—I have heard from England, in a manner. That is, a friend I knew there, arrived in Boston only yesterday.”

“Yes? And who was that?” said Mrs. Soam.

Garde had started to go up-stairs to her own apartment, which she shared with Prudence, but she halted at the door and came back, for Wainsworth said:

“His name is Adam Rust.”

Garde and Prudence both took up some knitting and began to ply the needles, over which their eyes were bent, intently.

“Yes,” said Mrs. Soam, encouragingly. “Is he a Puritan?”

“I don’t know,” said Wainsworth, frankly. “I think perhaps he is. At any rate, he belongs here, I feel sure. But wherever he belongs, or whatever he is, he’s a splendid fellow. I was riding to hounds when we met. My horse threw me, and my foot was caught in the stirrup. I was being dragged when Rust stopped my run-away horse. He is one of the most superb horsemen I ever knew.”

“Why, do you mean that he saved your life?” inquired Goodwife Soam. “It must have been a terrible moment.”

“I haven’t much brains, but I was about to lose what

I had," said Wainsworth, generously. "He came in the nick of time. And afterwards, when I happened to be a bit short of funds—as a man will, you know, sometimes—why, he loaned me nearly every penny he had in the world!"

"Was that not most improvident?" said the listener.

"Yes, I suppose it was. You know, you wouldn't call him exactly provident. He is too good-hearted a fellow to be that, you know. He is one of those fellows you can tell anything about yourself. I tell him everything."

He looked up at Garde, as he said this, wishing he could tell her the half that he had confided to Rust. She never lifted her eyes, however, from her knitting.

"And what did he tell you of your mother?" asked Mrs. Soam.

"Oh, nothing. He never knew the mater." Henry tried to think what Adam had told him. "He just—well, told me of a few general matters."

Garde listened eagerly, almost breathlessly, dwelling on every word concerning Rust, but her aunt returned once more to the subject of Wainsworth's mother and no more was heard of Adam, for Henry presently bade them all good day and proceeded to follow, belated as he was, where his chief had gone, at the close of the meeting.

When he disappeared, Garde dropped her knitting and went quietly up the stairs, for the purpose of being alone, to think.

CHAPTER XII.

HOURS THAT GROW DARK.

CAPTAIN WILLIAM PHIPPS was as eager as a boy, now that he had definitely settled on the purpose which had for its object the quest of the sunken treasure. Therefore he and Adam and the beef-eaters worked unceasingly to prepare the brig, "Captain Spencer," for the cruise to the Bahamas.

What with provisioning the craft, enlisting more trustworthy men for the voyage and refitting a somewhat depleted and inefficient arsenal, Phipps waxed brusque and impatient. He had desired to get away from Boston not later than Saturday afternoon, but as the tasks before them had been tackled by Adam and the rest of them on Friday morning, the worthy Captain's ambition to be on the sea on the Sabbath—a day for which he had little liking—was vain. Saturday night therefore approached and Phipps fumed, for he could not so outrage the Puritans' sense of things Godly as to sail on Sunday, wherefore the departure had perforce to be postponed till Monday morning.

Adam, with an exaggerated sense of honor, had resisted the longing to go by night to that same alley in which he had rescued Garde's cat and met that young lady with Mistress Prudence Soam. He spent the time with his beef-eaters and with Wainsworth, making

merry for these music-hungering friends on the violin, which now seemed to him more than ever the one thing left him on which to concentrate the love of his affectionate nature.

On Sunday morning Captain Phipps betook himself to his brig, as she lay in mid-stream, to pother about by himself, while Adam dutifully escorted Goodwife Phipps to meeting, at South Church, which was nearer than the old church and more popular as well.

It was a solemn, black procession of Puritans that walked decorously to meeting in the sunlight. The day was one of almost unseemly beauty, for Nature was fairly barbarous in the colors which she wore like jewels. There was riotous gladness in the breeze that tipped back the bonnets from many a pretty face, to let the sun have a look at peach-bloom cheeks ; there was a deviltry in the warmth that the girls felt first at their ankles, where thin stockings only protected them ; and there was a twitter and chirrup of birds in the air.

In their homely black and their stiff white collars, the men were as solemn as posts. No bells sounded, either from afar, with mellowed peelings, nor nearer with persistent nagging. Men, women and children alike walked with their eyes steadfastly fixed on the ground.

However, there were two pairs of eyes less meek. They were Adam's and Garde's. It therefore came to pass that each discovered the other, before the church portals were reached. Garde's heart began to beat as if it were knocking to call Adam's attention. Adam's hammered as if it were forging more fetters to bind him tighter in his love.

Garde, with her grandfather and Wainsworth, preceded Rust and Mrs. Phipps into the sanctuary. Adam followed eagerly, and yet as one about to enter a prison. He had seen Wainsworth, but Henry, in his ecstasy, had contented himself with looking devotedly at Garde's little shoes.

Inside the church, Garde sat somewhat toward the back, while Adam, with the men, occupied a bench at the side of the building from which he could see Mistress Merrill's profile perfectly, as often as he dared to look in her direction.

Garde, with much resolution, permitted herself not so much as one tiny flicker of a glance toward Adam, all during the time of service. She felt him looking at her, however, from time to time, and rejoiced that her little ruse to make him stirred up and mayhap jealous was succeeding. The flush of maidenhood's beauty which had mounted to her cheek, the moment she found that Adam was near, remained throughout the morning.

Later to church than any other, a man, alone, and none too reverent, entered the door and took a seat on the side, from which he could scan many of the faces in the place. It was Randolph. He had come there for the sole purpose of looking about him, his reasons being various, but none of them Godly. He shut his mouth grimly at beholding Adam present, but when his gaze finally rested on Garde, all the more radiantly beautiful for the simplicity of her dress, it became fixed, first, then covetous, and finally passionate.

It was not until the meeting was finished that Garde ventured to take a sly glance at Adam. Her gaze met

his. She saw and comprehended, then, such a fathomless sadness in his look, before he could drop his gaze, that she was instantly most penitent over what she had done.

It was the same look she had seen in his eyes that day when he had marched as a captive, at the end of King Philip's war—a look she never had, and never could, forget.

As for Rust, he had confirmed to his satisfaction, all that Wainsworth had told him. If he had not been convinced before and ready to renounce his own hopes, he was quite persuaded and determined now. He thought how fortunate it was that Phipps had the brig all ready to sail on the morrow. It was very much better to end the matter with the smallest possible delay.

He spent the afternoon with Phipps and the beef-eaters on the ship. To his credit, he made himself an agreeable and cheerful companion. Indeed, what with the songs he had sung for Wainsworth and the others, and the spirit of his raillery, boasting and readiness to fight or to fiddle, he had succeeded in deceiving them all as to the nature under his waistcoat.

Yet when the night was come and the magnet which had been drawing and drawing him to that alley, sacred to the memory of Garde's cat, once more exercised its influence, more powerfully than ever, he became a restless creature.

It has been said that man justifies himself in whatsoever he does. Adam thought he needed justification for desiring to go once, just once, into that alley, wherefore he prepared his mind with several excuses. Armed with these he at length slipped away from the

Crow and Arrow and found his way to the rear of that house into which he had seen Garde and Prudence disappear, on that memorable first night in Boston.

Had Rust come to this trysting-place at the same hour on the two previous evenings, he would have met Mistress Merrill face to face. Garde, in her impulsive eagerness to see him again, had waited for little debating before she slipped from the house, to see if he might not have come to deliver that certain trinket from Hispaniola. Her cousin Prudence, more diffident, had desired to come forth also, but she had lacked Garde's readiness of execution and courage. However she had not lacked the incentive, and as no maiden is utterly awed, in the presence of a tender passion, Mistress Prudence had at length steeled her heart, and to-night she came tripping diffidently forth, not long after Adam's arrival on the scene.

So silently had Prudence come that Adam, who might have arranged otherwise, suddenly found himself confronted, before he had made up his mind whether he wished any one might appear or not.

"Why, good evening, Mr. Rust," said Prudence, with a little gasp at her own daring, "why, I was just walking in the garden and couldn't think who it might be, here by the gate. Why, how strange we should meet!"

Adam had said good evening, waving a salute grandly with his hat, the moment Prudence had spoken, for he had realized instantly that she was not Garde and his presence of mind had risen to the occasion without delay.

"I—wandered up here looking, for—for distressed cats," said Adam.

"Oh, did you?" said Prudence, innocently. "That was real noble."

Adam hated to have anything he did called noble. He therefore hastened to do penance, in a measure, for his slightly inaccurate statement.

"I am bound to confess," he added, "that I did have a faint hope that I might see either you or Mistress Merrill—or both—to say good-by, for to-morrow I am off again, for a jaunt on the sea."

"Going away?" echoed Prudence. "Oh, why, Garde might be disappointed, not to see you and say good-by."

Adam thought this was sweet of Prudence, as indeed it was. He could have mentioned some disappointments himself, but he refrained from doing so. He thought, in a somewhat bitterly philosophical vein, that perhaps it was better as it was, better that he should not see Garde again, under the circumstances.

"You are very kind," he said. "Perhaps it would not be asking too much of you to get you to take a small packet—in fact, I have presumed to provide myself with two little packages, which I trust you and Mistress Merrill will receive, merely as tokens of a rover's amusement in the little event of a few evenings ago, and of a pleasant memory which the episode will furnish for otherwise lonely moments."

He had indeed made up two small parcels, intending behind the ruse of making a small gift to both Garde and Prudence, to bestow thus the present to Garde brought from Hispaniola and long delayed as to

delivery. He therefore took these carefully wrapped trinkets from his pocket and held them forth.

"If I might prevail upon your good nature," he said, "to accept this one and to give this other into the hands of Mistress Merrill, I should be grateful to you for the favor."

Fate takes obvious delight in making her weavings complete. It was inevitable that Garde should come out to that garden gate, while Adam and Prudence were talking there together, and that she should therefore see Adam, presenting something to her cousin, and should at once proceed to place an erroneous construction on the situation. Angered, humiliated and hurt, she fled back to the house, as Prudence was accepting the proffered trinkets and regretfully bidding Adam Rust good-by.

It was hardly feasible so to conceal herself in the house that Prudence would be long in searching her out, when at length that quiet and pleased young lady came back to the house, hence Garde accepted Adam's present before she exactly comprehended what she was doing.

Prudence, having performed her duty, when the gift had passed to its rightful owner, hastened away to open her own packet, in privacy. She found an old Spanish doubloon in the bit of paper, and though a trifle disappointed that she did not discover an accompanying inscription, was nevertheless gladdened to the very core of her being.

Garde, rebellious and ready to weep with conflicting emotions, which had not been assuaged by hearing Prudence tell how innocently she had happened to

meet Mr. Rust, felt like flinging Adam's gift upon the floor and stamping it flat with her lively little foot. But the tenderness of the love she had fostered so long, and the slight hope to which she still clung, combined with her natural curiosity, proved too strong for resistance. She opened the neatly tied and folded paper.

Inside was a golden brooch of exquisite workmanship, a treasure absolutely irresistible to any beauty-loving young woman. But her gaze flew to a secondary little wad of paper, folded as a note. This she tore open with nerveless fingers.

"From Hispaniola," Adam had written, simply.

Under this he had penned a quatrain of rather obscure meaning and weakly versification :

"It always haps, when there are three,
But two can bide in unity ;
That two may long their gladness keep,
The third should bury sorrow deep."

Garde read these lines and then read them again, more puzzled by the second perusal than she had been by the first. She began then to feel wounded. She was ready to cry. The brooch had made her heart bound with joy. Then she remembered that Adam had procured it for her years before, since when his affections might have been transferred, his ideals might have been altered and the sense in which he gave it her might have been reduced to something utterly unromantic. He might indeed have given it to her only because of his desire to keep a foolish promise made in his boyhood.

The lines were not an explanation of his conduct.

If they meant that she was a third party, interfering with the happiness of himself and Prudence, then the unkindness of it all was not the full depth of its possibilities—it was impudent, arrogant and fairly hateful, in that light.

On the other hand, could it be possible that Adam did not mean that she was such a third party as the lines indicated, and if so, what did he mean? Was he himself such a third party? This appeared impossible on the very face of it, for not only was Garde not interested in, and happy with, some other person, but if she had been, Adam could not possibly have known it, and certainly, in the two times they had met, she had given him no reason for supposing that anything of the sort could exist.

It was too much for her wearied brain to cope with. She had puzzled over Adam's conduct every moment since their meeting in the woods, till she could think no more. There was the beautiful brooch, and here were these ominous, enigmatical lines. All she knew was that she was very unhappy.

Adam, in the meantime, made progress back to the tavern as if he were all but becalmed and had no more than steerage way at the best. He had only one thing to be glad about, and that was that his beef-eaters would not be at the Crow and Arrow to meet him. They had already taken up quarters on the brig. There Adam expected to join them, with the last of his worldly goods, when he should have taken final leave of Wainsworth.

When he reached his solitary apartments, however, he was sorry the faithful old beef-eaters were not there

to give him welcome, for the place was dark and cheerless. He lighted his candle and looked about the room with melancholy interest.

Presently his attention was attracted to a number of bright spots on the floor, irregular patches, from which the light was reflected somewhat dully. Candle in hand he walked toward the corner where these glittering objects were strewn about. With a sudden misgiving he noted that his violin case had been brought out from the place of concealment in which he had carefully kept it.

Bending forward, with one hand poised in an attitude of arrested action, he stared at the litter on the floor, his face becoming colorless as he stood there, numbed. A low moan came from between his lips—such a sound as he had made in his sleep, as he once lay curled up at the foot of the stake on which King Philip's head was impaled.

The fragments on the floor were the scraps and litter of his violin. There was not one piece as large as three of his fingers. Isaiah Pinchbecker and Psalms Higgler had taken their revenge.

Slowly Adam knelt down and gathered the bits of wood in a little heap, lovingly. He was not enraged. A lover who finds his sweetheart murdered cannot at first be filled with anger. Adam gathered every little scrap and splinter. He tried to fit little fragments together; he tried to efface heel-marks and bits of boot-grime from some of the pieces, as if he searched for features which he loved.

It seemed as if he could not realize that the violin was actually destroyed. He looked away from it and

then back at the small heap beneath his hands, like one half expecting to wake from a dream and find everything as it had been before something unthinkable occurred.

Perhaps a woman who had given to her child, willingly and absolutely, the mastery over her every emotion, thought and hope, and who had come upon the body of that child, slain and mutilated, could have understood what lonely Adam Rust underwent.

For like such a woman, conceiving a fear that the despoilers might return and rob her even of the body of her child, the man presently, in a fever of excitement, took every patch, shred and chip of the red wood and hiding it carefully inside his waistcoat, dropped himself down from the window to the earth and went away in the darkness, like a wild thing pursued.

CHAPTER XIII.

A KISS DEFERRED.

V
GARDE, when she had questioned her cousin Prudence, until there was little or nothing concerning Adam's visit and farewell at the gate which she did not know, was still far from being certain of anything in connection with the whole predicament.

One thing, however, gave her a small measure of comfort. This was that her brooch was much more beautiful than the Spanish doubloon Adam had given to Prudence. Yet this comfort grew cold as she reflected that even if Adam did possibly like her as much as he did Prudence, he had written her those incomprehensible lines about burying sorrow, and he had gone away, she knew not where, or in what manner, without even giving her an opportunity of bidding him God-speed.

Mistress Merrill was not impulsive and nimble-witted without having resources at command, when occasion demanded. She was up ahead of the ordinary lark, on Monday morning, making straight for the home of old Goody Dune, for whom she frequently gathered simples.

Goody Dune had not contented herself in life with simples only. She had gathered complexities of wisdom

and the things abstruse in life, for many a year. She was a wrinkled old woman whom children, kittens, dogs, horses and all things guided by instinct always sought in friendship at once. Anyone with patience enough to reconstruct her face on the lines it must once have worn, in her youth, would have found personal beauty still indicated in the old woman's countenance. Her eyes still ensnared pretty lights of humor; her lips were still of that soft texture which in youth is so charming and in old age too flexible over vacancies where teeth are gone. Her hair was plentiful and so entirely gray that one might have looked at it closely and then have said: "Yes, the black ones seem to be coming; they will soon be getting quite thick."

Never yet had Garde been able to get to Goody's house sufficiently early to knock on the door. Goody always opened it to receive her. And always the old woman's great black cat stood up, on top of the tall clock, on which she had been lying but the moment before, now arching her back and stretching, to add her welcome to that of her mistress.

The room never had ceased to have its fascinations for Garde, since the first time she had seen it, in her childhood. The small bags, which hung from the rafters, along with pendants made of herbs, roots and bulbs, might have contained gold and precious gems, for all that Garde knew to the contrary, while the dark cupboard and the great chest increased the possibilities of the place, which would have been so grand to rummage in, had it not been for the brass warming-pan, so terribly like a watchful moon, forever looking down from the wall. Then lastly, and mostly, in some

particulars, there was Rex, the jackdaw, a veritable concentration of all the dark arts and wisdoms extant.

"Good morning, my dear," said Goody, as Garde entered, breathless with her haste, "you have come to see me early."

"She's in love," said the jackdaw, gravely.

"Oh, dear me!" gasped the girl.

"Rex, you wicked one," expostulated Goody, mildly. "Never mind, my dear, he found you out that morning last week."

This was the truth for Goody had said these very same words, several times, in the presence of Rex, no more than five minutes after Garde had gone, that day when she and Adam had met in the forest.

"But I—oh, Goody, Rex is really wicked," said Garde. "But I do so need you to tell me something."

"Who doesn't," answered Goody. "What a pity it would be if I could never save anyone in the world from some little pain, or some mistake, and yet"—she shook her head, smiling half sadly—"how few human beings are willing even to listen. They must all burn their fingers and learn for themselves."

"Fools!" said the jackdaw, "fools, fools, fools. I'm a fool myself."

Fortunately Garde was not unaccustomed to these interruptions on the part of the knowing bird, so that, although he always made her pause and look at him, as if she expected to see how he did it, when he spoke, she was now enabled to tell Goody her troubles with quite as much rapidity as coherence.

She held back nothing. She told all about her original glimpse of Adam in the Plymouth procession,

of their meeting, her immediate regard for him, then and there, the long fostering of her affection, and the events of the days just past. This done, she produced her slip of paper, on which Adam had written his mediocre verse, and laid it before the wise woman to be deciphered.

Goody read the lines several times. "How old are you now, my dear?" she asked, and then she added, "It hasn't anything to do with your worries; it is only for my own foolish gratification that I ask."

"I am eighteen," said Garde.

"Well, I should have been puzzled myself, at eighteen," said the old woman. She looked into vacancy, for a moment, dwelling on some fond memory that brought her sad smile to her withered lips again. "But you need not be worried. He loves you, dear, as indeed he should, but for some reason or other he believes you care for somebody else, and he is therefore taking himself away. Believing as he does, he is certainly right, as well as brave, in going away."

"But I don't love—like any one else," protested Garde. "And I don't see how or why he ever got such an idea into his head. He doesn't know anybody that I know. He went to meeting with Mrs. Phipps—Oh! oh—Mr. Wainsworth!—He does know Mr. Wainsworth."

"Yes, dearie, and does Mr. Wainsworth seem to fancy you, or anything of that sort?"

"And Mr. Wainsworth told us he had seen Adam, and that he told him everything," said Garde, thinking for herself and musing aloud. "Oh, dear me!"

"Oh, dear me!" said Rex, derisively.

"And do you know where your Adam is going, and when?" inquired Goody. "Those ought to be your main considerations now."

"Why, to-day," answered Garde. "But I don't know where, or anything else about it. What shall I do? If he goes away like that, I may never see him again!"

"Did you say he went to meeting with Goodwife Phipps?"

"Yes,—yes, I saw him myself."

"Then you can be almost certain that he is off somewhere with Captain William Phipps, for a more restless, sea-hankering man never lived and remained so good as Captain Phipps."

"Oh, I might have thought of that!"

"Then you ought to be able to think of something to do this very morning," said Goody, a little, pretty color burning up in her wrinkled cheeks. "It is still early, and you have good stout legs."

Garde suddenly jumped up and kissed her.

"Good-by!" she said. "Oh, thank you, thank you, so much! But—haven't you something I can take to—to Captain Phipps?"

Goody immediately supplied her with a small package. "Take him this tea," she said. "No sailor should ever go to sea without it."

Garde sped away, as if on the wings of impulse.

"She's in love! she's in love!" screamed the jackdaw, hilariously. As she ran, Garde could hear him clapping his wings against his body, in noisy applauding.

Running and walking alternately, by the quieter

streets and lanes, meeting no one on her way, Garde finally arrived in sight of the ship-yard belonging to Wilian Phipps. Her first impulsive thought had by now had time to abate somewhat and give place to a more sober reflection. Mistress Merrill began to wonder what she would say, if she did manage to see Adam Rust. It had been by a swift inspiration, almost an instinct of a maidenly young woman, that she had provided herself with an excuse for racing to this place. No modest girl could bear the thought of seeming to run after a man, or to say anything bold to him, or anything calculated to show that she held herself in any way other than proudly aloof, where he must bring his love, if he would sue for her favor.

She thought of all this as she went. She also began to think that perhaps Goody Dune might be mistaken. If Adam were found and he did not love her after all, not for all the world would he get one sign from her that she loved him or cared for him one tiny bit, or cared whether he went or remained.

She was breathless, rosy as a cherry and excited. Her hair had fallen down and the plaits had loosened. It hung about her face and nestled against her creamy throat like strands of ebony, richly copper-plated. Her dark eyes were flashing; her lips were parted, revealing her teeth like little white soldiers in a row. As she ran, her skirts whipped upward, in curves, about the roundest and trimmest ankles imaginable.

She now observed a small boat, approaching the landing. Out in the stream the sails of the "Captain Spencer" were rising like clouds. Garde then discovered the figure of a tall man, who had been sitting on a

heap of logs, for he arose and went toward the dory, which had evidently come from the ship to fetch him. She recognized familiar outlines and the drag of the sword which the man was wearing.

“Adam!” she cried. “Oh, Adam, wait!”

But she was still too far away to be heard. Adam continued leisurely walking toward the landing. Then the sailor who had rowed ashore for Rust, saw the picturesque figure coming toward them so swiftly, and pointed her out to Adam.

Rust was puzzled for a moment. Then he knew it was Garde. His heart turned a double somersault in his breast. He felt himself grow red to the tips of his ears. He walked toward the girl as one uncertain of what is expected of him next.

Garde stopped running, when some distance away, and came on more slowly, brushing a wisp of hair from her face. Suddenly afraid of what she had done, uncertain of what she would or could say, to explain her presence so that he would think no less of her than before, she was glad he had not heard her call out his name, but she was tremendously excited. Her eyes shone like brown jewels. Her bosom was heaving rapidly.

“Why—good morning, Mistress Merrill,” said Adam.

“Oh—it is you—Mr. Rust!” said Garde, in the surprise which a woman can feign on a second’s notice. “Why, I thought—why, good morning. I thought I might find Captain Phipps here, and Goody Dune wished me to give him this tea, and she heard—she heard he was going away this morning.”

"Oh! thank you, very much," said Adam, a little thickly, in his tremendous excitement, which he was endeavoring to restrain. "Goody Dune was very thoughtful, and you were kind to come."

"But Goody didn't tell me I should find you here," said Garde, truthfully enough. She had never felt so stirred in her life. But outwardly she was beginning to be calm. "You told Prudence you were going away. Can it be possible that you are going with Captain Phipps?"

"Yes, this morning," said Adam.

Then there was a silence for a moment. Garde hardly knew what to say next. If she should make the slightest advance and he should receive it coldly, or derisively, or without understanding, she would die of mortification. The pause became dreadful to bear—to them both.

"I got—Prudence gave me the brooch—from Hispaniola," Garde stammered, presently.

Adam saw it. It was rising and falling like a little golden ship, on her bosom. He felt himself somewhat at sea. If he could only have blurted out that he loved her—if it had not been for Wainsworth, what a moment this would have been!

"I am glad you like it," he said.

Garde felt that there was little encouragement in this remark. "You will not forget to give the tea to Captain Phipps, will you?" she said. "I think I must now return."

"I wish you had brought this tea down here for me!" said Rust suddenly, no longer answerable to his loyalty to Wainsworth.

Garde had wished he would say these very words. She had rehearsed the answer she would make if he did. Her heart, had it been a bird beating its wings, could not have fluttered more wildly.

"If I had come down here to see you, it would only have been to tell you that you have made some mistake," she said, averting her gaze from his and looking on the ground.

Adam trembled, uncontrollably, violently. She saw it in his hand.

"Do you mean——" he said.

"Yes," said Garde, raising her eyes to his frankly.

"Then I can love you! I do love you! I'll come back here and marry you, sweetheart! I shall love you and tell you I love you and love you!" he burst forth passionately. "My little Garde! my love! my sweetheart!—my little wife that I shall have and love till my heart is full!"

Garde gasped for breath in the whirlwind of his words, that swept her fairly off her feet. Her hand had been on a post, where she had been picking away little particles of bark. Adam took it. His big hand encompassed it all about. She felt his soul rush to his fingers, to meet the throbbing of her own emotions.

"Oh, Adam!" was all she could say for a moment.

"Garde!" he replied, "my Garde—my love! Why didn't you tell me about it before?"

"You—you were the one," she said, somewhat regaining her footing. "You were going away without even saying good-by."

"I thought——"

"Yes, you thought such silly things," interrupted

Garde, impulsively, yet joyfully. "You thought I could like somebody else, and that is why you were going away—without even asking. And I don't know why you ever came to see me the first time and made me name my cat Standing-Panther, if you were going to think such things as that."

Adam laughed. It was a sudden bubbling over of his spirits. He was the bright-eyed, joyous boy again, all at once.

"Poor Henry—poor Henry!" he said, with irrepressible mirth and gladness. "But he never loved you as I love you, sweetheart! He couldn't! I love you so that I would cut down an army to get you and run away with you here in my arms though all the demons of earth should follow!"

"Oh but, Adam—you mustn't!" said Garde, as Rust was about to demonstrate the ardor of which he had spoken.

"What, sweetheart, not one little kiss?" he said.

"Why, no, of course not, Adam," she answered him, blushing prettily.

"Aren't we betrothed?" he demanded.

"I have not said I will marry you, have I, Adam?" she said, roguishly.

"But you shall, sweetheart. I love you so much that you can't help it! I love you so it seems as if I shall explode! I love you, dear! Do you hear me say it? I love you! I love you, Garde. You do love me, sweetheart—just a little?"

"Yes, I—love you a lit——," Garde was saying.

"A-d-a-m R-u-s-t,—come—aboard!" came a great voice across the harbor, from the brig out in the stream.

"Beg pardon, sir, the Captin's calling," shouted the sailor, who had rowed ashore for Rust.

Adam waved him a dumb reply. "Then you will give me one little kiss, for good-by, sweetheart?" he begged.

"No—it's too soon," said Garde. "Besides——"

"But I am going away," interrupted Adam. "And I have loved you seven years!"

"Oh, you are not going away now—not now, when we have just found out there was some mistake?" said Garde.

"I have promised to go, and therefore I must," said Adam. "And I have to go and get that fortune now, so that I can come back and marry you, sweetheart! I must keep my promise to Captain Phipps."

"But you won't stay away for seven years again, will you, Adam?" inquired Garde, looking at him wistfully and candidly now, with all her love in her eyes. "If you do——" she left the sentence unfinished.

"No, I will not," Adam assured her. "But if I remained away for fifty years, I should love you and love you still. And will you love me, dearest, as long as that?"

"Yes, I shall love you longer than that," answered Garde. She was not impulsive now, but her manner was sweetly earnest, therefore it was more beautiful than all her other beauty. "I shall always love you now, Adam," she added. "It seems to me as if I always had."

William Phipps roared across the water once again.

Adam's less tumultuous, more enduring love, came into his eyes. He thought the caress of her long look

was sweeter than the kiss Garde might have given him.

"I shall have to go," he murmured. "God bless you and keep you, sweetheart. Good-by, dear Garde."

"Good-by, Adam," said Garde. "I shall pray for your swift return."

He swept her little hand to his lips for a second and then strode away.

Garde placed her other hand over the tingling fingers he had kissed, as if to prevent the caress from escaping.

As he went out over the water, she waved her tiny handkerchief to him, and permitted two warm tears to trickle down her face.

Adam's memory of her was of her pretty, brown figure, seen from afar, and the look in her eyes, which he felt that no space could dim in his vision.

CHAPTER XIV.

OVERTURES FROM THE ENEMY.

AGAINST his long journey across the Atlantic, David Donner made preparations that consumed no small amount of time. A sufficient quantity of money had been subscribed by the patriots who were so concerned for the charter, but this was one of the least important details of Donner's contemplated venture. As a matter of fact, the Puritans had acquired the arts of procrastination patiently and laboriously, for this had proved their most efficient weapon of defense, in those days of struggling against the Stuart dynasty, and therefore the cream of the putting-off science permeated the very being of David Donner. He nursed his preparations till they grew and flourished.

Two ships bound for England sailed without him. He was quite calm as he contemplated further events of a like nature. At length his fellow-citizens, eager to have him at his work, expostulated with him, mildly. His answer astounded them all. He said he had reasons for believing that Edward Randolph was beginning to feel inclined toward more kindness of spirit with regard to the Colony and the men who had built it there in the wilderness. Randolph had made overtures of friendship to him. He appeared to be a more

agreeable person than any one of them had heretofore believed.

Randolph, indeed, was fairly wooing the old man's regard. He had begun by nodding, pleasantly, when he and Donner passed in the streets. He had followed this up by halting at Donner's gate and admiring his flowers, for which the old man had a secret passion.

"If I could dissuade him from his evil purposes," said David to his colleagues, "if I could win his favor for the charter, and so enlist his services with us, instead of against us, I should be of vastly more service to Massachusetts by remaining here than I could be if I were to go to the Court of Charles."

Nevertheless the governors held the promise of David Donner sacred. He would go as agreed, unless he could shortly furnish something substantial as a result of this coy flirtation of Randolph's to gain his good opinion.

It had been observed that Randolph had been a regular attendant at South Church for several Sundays. This new departure of his had been at first regarded with suspicion. Coupled with his attention to David, however, it began to look honest and therefore hopeful.

Grandfather Donner was pothering about in his garden, on one of these mornings, when Randolph paused at the gate, as he had frequently done, and asked leave of the old man to present him with a small rose tree, having even then a beautiful rose upon it, to plant in some sunny corner of the place.

No olive branch of peace could have opened Donner's heart more effectually than did this simple matter.

"Come in, friend," said he. "Come in."

"It has always seemed a pity to me," said Randolph, "that men whose political ideas may happen to differ should not be friendly in other particulars, with no more thought of their daily affairs than they would have of the clothing upon their backs."

"Just so," said David, who thought the time propitious for missionary work at home, "but I should think, however, that with your youth and earnestness you might have a great future before you, as one of us, working as we work, hoping as we hope, and helping to build this new commonwealth on a rock of solidity and unity."

"I have thought of that," said the heavy-browed visitor. "But how would a man proceed to accomplish a result so remote from one like myself?"

"Would you plant it here, or next to the wall?" said David, holding the rose-tree in his hand and looking about for a suitable place in which to tuck its roots.

"I would plant it here, by all means," said Randolph.

Donner began to dig in the earth with a knife. "Well," said he, "I should say you would do best to get married and adopt our ways, and labor with us to maintain our government and rights."

Randolph's deep-set eyes gleamed with satisfaction. He said: "You may not be surprised to know that I have had such an ambition as this. Could I look for your encouragement and support, if I entertained the idea of marrying, here among your people, and making my life with your lives?"

“Why, to be sure, friend. I would be the first to welcome the attachment of your heart and your interests among us. And have you looked with favor upon some one of our young women?”

Randolph noted with pleasure that the rose-tree was firmly planted and the earth about it patted and pressed down almost affectionately. “It would hardly be fair,” he said, “to give one flower, only to ask for another.”

“Would you have some of my poor flowers?” said the old man, innocently. “Why you shall, then, anything you like.”

“I spoke of my hopes that I have dared to entertain,” said the visitor. “I referred to the fairest flower in all Boston, indeed in all Massachusetts.”

Donner looked up at him quickly. He rose to his feet, having been down on one knee to plant the rose. “Have I understood you aright?” he said.

“It has slipped from my tongue unguardedly,” said the younger man. “Your encouragement of my hopes led me to this confidence. But I feel I can speak to you almost as if you were in the attitude of a father. I can come to you where I could not come to any other man in Boston. I have seen Mistress Merrill, in the simplicity and piety of her life, and this has made me wish to become one of you, working with you and living your lives. Can you not encourage me so far as this?”

David Donner was all but rendered speechless. Such a thought as that Garde had grown up and blossomed had never entered his mind. But not only to find that this was so, but also to have Edward Randolph—the enemy—desiring this alliance, this was more than he could think of, for a moment. He had egged the man on,

while he had some vague idea of some other young woman in mind—some other man's daughter, or granddaughter,—he had been ready to abet such an arrangement, gladly, for the good of the colony, but to find that it was Garde that Randolph wanted—this was indeed a bolt from a clear sky.

"Friend," he said, finally, "I shall have to think this over."

"I feared it would sound abrupt," said the visitor, "yet it is not a sudden fancy with me. It has been my constant thought for many weeks. I have even foreseen difficulties. I have worked so many years apparently against the interests most dear to the colonists."

Donner nodded at him, for this sounded frank. But the old man's thoughts were afield, wandering, for the proposition came home to him with tremendous significance.

"But," resumed Randolph, "any man can conceive that an agent must do, to the best of his ability, that which he honestly believes to be his duty, howsoever unpleasant the task imposed upon him may finally appear."

"True," said David, still vaguely.

"I have done my work as well as I could," the man went on. "I have accumulated matter of vast significance. I am almost sorry that I have done so thoroughly well, the task appointed me, and still all this work might make me the better fitted for citizenship among you, if I follow out your suggestion."

Donner was not insensible of the threat which this artful speech implied, the threat that all this ac-

cumulated matter and knowledge would be used against the colony and the charter, if this man were not made one of their number. But Garde was not to be lightly weighed in the balance. Randolph's frankness partially disarmed the old man; and the life of the charter, he felt, was the life of their independence, their manhood, their very being. The tiny roots and tendrils of American patriotism grew from the very hearts of those early fathers of liberty.

"This is a matter which would much concern Mistress Merrill," said Donner. "I made the error of trying to coerce her mother. I shall never coerce Garde."

"I trust not," replied his guest. "And yet I hope you will think upon the matter and mayhap speak to Mistress Merrill in this regard, for although I am in a conflict, 'twixt my duty to my King and the high regard which I have been constrained to place with you and your people, through Mistress Merrill, yet I fear I am eager to be remiss with Charles, rather than a traitor to my own heart."

"I will think upon it," said David, slowly.

Randolph thanked him, spoke of the rose again and went his way. He was a gardener himself, and having planted his seed, knew enough not to dig it up to see if it had yet begun to sprout.

David Donner sat down to think, not of Garde and not of all that Randolph's visit signified, but of Garde's mother and his harshness when her heart had burgeoned with aspirations for itself, and of the pain and wretchedness he had brought to all concerned. He thought of the mad little elopement into which he had driven his

daughter, which had ended so disastrously to the honest but poverty-overtaken father of her child. Then he thought of the home-coming, the birth of Garde and the death of the forlorn little mother. He could hear again her faint words of forgiveness ; he could see again her wan smile on her faded lips ; he could still feel the weak, white hands that raised to slip themselves about his neck and which, when he had put them down, he folded on her breast, still forever.

“I have never coerced little Garde,” he said aloud, “never, Ruth, never.”

CHAPTER XV.

LOVE'S INVITING LIGHT.

SOMETHING had happened to Mistress Garde Merrill, even as far back as upon that first Sunday at Meeting, when Adam had been beneath the South Church roof, where she could see him from the corners of her eyes. Love had left its sign-manual upon her. She had suddenly become illumined from within, by her heart's emotions, so that she appeared to shine from afar, in the somewhat gray and unjoyous lives of the Puritan young men about her.

Thus it was that, in addition to Randolph, who attended the service solely for the purpose of feasting his eyes upon her beauty, there was always Wainsworth, who heard nothing of the Meeting's cheerless proceedings. And there was also young Piety Tootbaker, who knew not at which shrine he was worshiping, from Sunday to Sunday.

Garde was half the time at her uncle, John Soam's. This fact increased the facilities for the young men to seek her presence, for the Soams were life-loving people, in spite of their Puritan conformity to the somewhat melancholy and smileless practices of the day. Moreover, John Soam, who thought himself something of a farmer, as well as a carpenter and Jack-of-all-genius, not infrequently impressed the would-be suitors into

various duties with which he was amusing himself about his place.

Piety Tootbaker was a fat young man of modest wealth in his own right, his father having died leaving Piety his sole heir. He was a heavy lump, who came often and said next to nothing, so that his intentions might have lain anywhere between Prudence, Garde and the family cow, for aught that any one could ascertain definitely. He was John Soam's easiest prey, when the farmer or carpenter, as the case might be, was seized with a desire to work.

Randolph contented himself with courting David Donner. He felt no small contempt for Wainsworth and Tootbaker, whose movements he was stealthily watching. He had placed his reliance on power always, and with complete success. The present was no time to alter his usual tactics.

Grandfather Donner, left alone with his thoughts, arrived at no conclusions rashly. He went systematically to work on his friends, to get from each an expression of belief that Randolph, if he would become one of them, working for instead of against them, would be a valuable factor for the preservation of the charter. This opinion he readily secured, especially as he gave no hint, as yet, of the method by which Randolph's conversion was finally to be accomplished. Indeed so much promise could his friends discern in the securing of an end so commendable, that David Donner began to justify himself in the thought of aiding this matter with all reasonable power. He encouraged the growth of a better opinion of Randolph, in his own mind. He argued the man's case with his friends, with

fanatical insistence, until they perforce admitted virtues in Randolph's disposition, heretofore quite overlooked.

Thus he wrought upon himself until, mentally, he accepted the ex-enemy as his grandson-in-law, to whom he was willing to extend his welcome, if not actually his love. With this development of the case, his dislike for the journey to England increased, while, far from abating, his concern for the charter grew the more active, as he dreamed of preserving it here at his own home.

His state of mind was not a thing at which he arrived immaturely. The proposition had come to him with something of a shock. He had never contemplated Garde's marriage at all. She was still a child to him, or at least, she had been, up to the moment when Randolph spoke. Not the least difficult of his tasks with himself had been that of compelling himself to admit that Garde had actually arrived at the threshold of womanhood—that she was marriageable. This having been finally accomplished, Randolph had half won his battle.

As long as Garde would presently desire to marry, then why not Randolph, especially as such an alliance would be of such tremendous political significance? Yet he continued still to tell himself that Ruth's child should not be coerced in any direction whither she was not counseled by her heart and her own inclination to proceed. He could see no reason, however, why she should entertain any notions which might be at variance with his own. Nevertheless it was not without emotion that he finally summoned Garde to the interview in which he meant to broach the proposition.

"My child," he began, "I have desired to have a talk with you, which bears upon matters of some importance to you and of vast significance to the state."

"Yes, Grandther," said Garde dutifully, and she sat down with her knitting. "I suppose you are going to England at last."

"That remains to be seen," said David. "The need for something to be done is great. No loyal soul in all our commonwealth could wish for aught but a chance to serve this colony in her present straits. Have you great love for Massachusetts and her people, Garde?"

"Is not love a passion?" she answered, without raising her eyes from her work.

"Love of one's country is not an unseemly passion," said her grandfather.

"Then I have for Massachusetts a seemly regard," said Mistress Merrill, who had given all her love elsewhere.

"And could you sacrifice somewhat of your personal thoughts, and mayhap desires, for the colony? Could you be a little patriot in the hour of your country's need, my child?" asked the old man, his look intent upon her face.

Garde thought he doubtless referred to his projected trip abroad. She was inclined to believe that she could endure the personal sacrifice of living with the Soams during his absence.

"I should try to be dutiful," she answered.

David Donner felt his old heart knocking on his ribs. It was a moment of much intensity for him.

"You have always been a dutiful daughter," he said.

"Have you ever had a thought, child, of the womanhood come upon you, and that mayhap you will one day become a wife now, and be as other women, a child no longer?"

"Any young woman would think on these matters by nature," replied Garde, sagely. "But I have thought of nothing to occur soon, as to such a matter."

"No, no, to be sure," said David, nervously. "Yet I have desired to speak with you upon this subject, for an estimable young man has asked me to do this in his favor."

Garde, who had believed his thought anywhere but here, looked up at him quickly. She saw the old man's face drawn and eager, his eyes bright with the flame of incipient fanaticism. She was wholly at a loss to understand him.

"A young man?" she repeated. "Some one has spoken to you thus of me?" For a moment her thought ran wildly to Adam. Could it be possible that he had returned and spoken to Grandther Donner already?

Donner cleared his throat. He was pale, for he had not come to this moment without some violence to his own conscience.

"My child," he said, a little huskily, "a great opportunity is offered to you to render a vast service to your country—to Massachusetts. Edward Randolph, who has long been against us, has come to me with an earnest desire to become one of us, working with us and not against us longer, and asking your hand in marriage, to cement the unity of his interests and hopes with ours. He appears to be an earnest, sincere man, at last

heartily in sympathy with our struggles, and worthy of good citizenship among us. I have told him I would speak to you upon this matter, Garde, and take him your answer." He paused and mopped his forehead with his handkerchief.

Garde could hardly believe her ears. She looked at her grandfather oddly. The color left her cheeks, for a moment, only to rush back in a flood at thought of Adam and the betrothal, to her so sacred. She had no thought whatsoever, during that interval, of the colony, or of patriotism, or of anything save what this proposition meant to Adam and to her. As for Randolph, she knew him only by sight, and her instinct had prompted her to shun him, if not to loathe him. Her impulse was to start to her feet and cry out a shrill repudiation of the man's offer. But the sight of Donner's face awed her. She had never seen him look like this before. She remained seated. She resumed her knitting.

"But I do not even know Mr. Randolph," she said, mildly. "I have not been taught to trust or to respect him."

"But if we have done him injustice," said David, eagerly, "surely we must welcome an opportunity to correct it. He has worked against us, it is true. He could overthrow our charter, but he chooses rather to become one of our number. If I go abroad, I may fail at the Court of Charles. If we can save our charter here at home, it will be the grandest thing we have ever done. And you can do it, my child—you can do this great thing! You will, I feel you will!"

Garde was a little terrified. The old man's anxiety

was almost dreadful to see. Had he been laying bare a steel crow-bar in his nature, she could not have comprehended more thoroughly the stubbornness which she felt opposition to him now would discover in her grandfather.

"This comes to me so suddenly," she said, "that I cannot at once think upon it."

"But you can think what it means to the colony!" said the man, passionately. "You would wish to save the charter! Mr. Randolph has become my friend. I have found that my former estimate of his character was false. He can take away our charter in a moment—his work is done. But he also can save us! He shall save us! Are you a daughter of this commonwealth—a daughter of a patriot? You can save the charter. Oh, what a glorious honor! You will let me take your answer back?"

Garde's color had gone again, not to return. This was a moment that frightened her heart. No one could have lived there as she had done and not be saturated with the hopes and fears of the colonists, not be trembling for the government, the independence, the manhood they had builded up on those stern rocks. In her first baby utterances she had lisped the word "Charter." For ten years their charter had been their Holy Grail to those American men and women of Massachusetts. The air was pregnant with patriotism. The Charter had hung trembling in the balance month after month, ever since Cromwell's son had abdicated the English throne and Charles had sat in power once again. Garde could not have been the true daughter of America she was, had she not thrilled first with the

possibilities of this fateful moment, before her soul shivered at the price she would have to pay to perform this splendid-seeming deed.

Sense of duty had been bred and ingrained in the children of that hour. It held a sway well-nigh incredible in youthful minds. It fell athwart Garde's thought with appalling weight. And yet her soul leaped to Adam's arms for protection, as her heart bounded to his with love. She felt as if she could crash through the window and run away, to the woods, —anywhere, to escape even the contemplation of this thing. Had it not been for her knitting she felt she must have done something dreadful. As it was she seemed to tie herself into the pattern—the wilder self—and so to gain a sense of calmness.

"I could hardly answer this so soon," she said. "Haste first leaves no time for thought after."

"Thought, child?" demanded the old man, on whom her calmness acted as her mother's had before her. "Can you wish to hesitate, when the whole state stands breathless for your answer?"

"And did you hold me so lightly that you said, 'Yes,' the moment this was presented to you?" said Garde. "Grandther, I was but a young girl this morning. What has a moment done to make me such a woman as this?"

"But our charter—our government—our liberty, child!" cried David, raising his two shaking hands above his head. "You can save them all!"

"And is it so light a matter for me to become the mother of our liberty?" said Garde, on whom the spirit of wisdom had strangely descended, no doubt from

Goody Dune. "Grandther, you would wish to think of this yourself."

She had risen from her seat. She faced her grandfather and he saw her eyes nearly on a level with his own. A look of her mother, sad, appealing, forgiving, played intangibly across her face. The old man's look seemed to follow its transit. He passed his nervous fingers along his brow. The fire died away in his eyes.

"Then think it over," he said, huskily. "Think it over, my child, think it over. I will not coerce your decision. No, I'll not coerce her, Ruth, no, no, I'll not!"

He moved to the door, as one in a dream, and left the room.

CHAPTER XVI.

GARDE'S LONELY VIGIL.

DAVID DONNER was not to be deterred for long, by the shadow of a memory which he had seen flit like a ghost of his past, across Garde's features. He was arriving at that age when a man's memory is not so strong as in years past and when the events of the day at hand seem therefore the more important. He fretted under his promise to go abroad, desiring this to be abrogated by his fellow-colonists, and this could only be done when he should persuade them that the charter would be saved, or at least his country better served, by his remaining where he was. He had not as yet spoken to his colleagues of Randolph's proposition. He was waiting for Garde to give him her answer.

The girl watched the old man narrowly, to see how long she could wait, for her answer was no more ready after a week than it had been on the first day. This was not entirely because her affections were placed elsewhere. She was a little patriot, otherwise her love for Adam would have prompted her reply at once, and from hot lips. She was undergoing a genuine struggle with herself. If it were true that she could save the charter, should she permit her own happiness or Adam's to stand before the happiness and rights of all the Massachusetts people? Had not Adam himself written

that when there are three and only two could be happy, the one, representing the minority, should suffer sorrow, that the greater number might preserve their joy? Then, when she and Adam were only two, how much more they should endure sorrow, when all the people of that colony weighed against them in the question.

No, it was not a simple matter in which her own desires could speak out above the clamor of duty. And yet, she could not feel the truth of Randolph's position and promise. Suppose he had not the ability, so to save the charter as her grandfather believed he would. Suppose, having the power, he should prove dishonest, when once he had won his desire. What was there in a wife to tie him to his obligation? If politics had prompted him to go so far, would they not continue to prompt him further, after the marriage had given him his way? To sacrifice herself and Adam was to Garde a mighty thing. She was capable of any heroism, but her mind and her nature exacted that it be not specious. No travail of motherhood ever gave a more acute or prolonged agony than was Garde's portion as she strove to give birth to a wise and right resolution.

Her grandfather, in the meantime, waxed more and more impatient. It had been his habit from early manhood to have his own way. In avoiding precisely the difficulties into which he had fallen with Garde's mother, he felt that he was on the safe side in his promise not to coerce his grandchild. This gave him the greater latitude in which to bring pressure upon her from what he conceived to be another standpoint. Yet that repression of his feelings and passions which he had practised for long among the Puritans, made him more

patient with Garde's indecision than would otherwise have been the case. He became childishly eager, more than harshly insistent, in this frame of mind. He coaxed her many times in a day, to see what her bravery and loyalty could do.

Christmas and New Year were long past, and still Garde had made no decision. In the spring, when she could make no more excuses for delaying, she told her grandfather how gladly she would comply with his wishes, if only she could know, absolutely, that Randolph would keep faith with the colonists and secure them their charter against all need for anxiety. This was her honest word. It came from her heart as if every word had been jagged, leaving her wounded and all but ill.

"Let Mr. Randolph prove that he will work for our good with the King," she said. "Let him secure us but one year of ease from this constant worry—let him show us a year of the favor he can win from Charles, and then I shall be content. This is not much that I ask. If his heart is so set upon me as he says, surely he could wait this time and do these things. A true regard could wait for as many years as Jacob served for Rachel."

With this decision, which he regarded as a binding promise, and which he represented to Randolph as a betrothal, David Donner had to be content. Randolph could not, without betraying intended perfidy, object to conditions so wisely conceived. Argument was precluded. Grimly shutting his jaws, the man consented to the arrangement, for else he must have abandoned his quest altogether.

As the months wore on, he went regularly to South Church, there to sit out the service, which he detested like poison, for the purpose of fixing his eyes upon Garde, as if he had been a beauty-vulture, only to be satisfied by gazing upon her until he was all but self-hypnotized. As for Garde, conscious as she was that the man thus stared in her direction, she never so much as once gave his eyes an answering glance. She did not love him ; there should never be any pretense, come what might, that she did. Her thoughts and her heart beats were true to Adam, and so should remain to the end.

David Donner told his colleagues in triumph of what he had done, of the answer Garde had made and of the hope they had for the future. He had justified himself in remaining in Boston.

The measure of the power wielded, even at the throne of England, by Edward Randolph, could never have been estimated in Massachusetts, but month after month slipped away while the charter remained intact and the men of that anxious colony breathed with a sense of relief which none had felt before, in nearly a score of years.

Garde, with what hope her year's respite inspired, began her lonely wait and watch for Adam's return.

CHAPTER XVII.

A NIGHT ATTACK.

THE night was a thing of perfection on the sea. The moon rode aloft and its light danced merrily on the tops of the waves. A smart breeze pouted the sails of the "Captain Spencer," till she plowed her way like a skimming albatross through the phosphorescence of the southern ocean.

On deck, Adam, William Phipps, the beef-eaters, the mate and a jovial boatswain, held high carnival together. They were nearing their goal, after a run which would have awakened some sort of a rollicking devil in a deacon. Captain Phipps had felt a spell of bubbling coming upon him for days. It always did, the moment he dropped Boston from sight, over the serrated edge of the riotous Atlantic. Therefore he had broken off the neck of a bottle of good, red juice, which had lain for a year in the hold of the brig, and this liquefied comfort had circulated generously.

The beef-eaters, arm in arm, spraddled about the sloping deck in a dance of which Terpsichore would never have been guilty, even in her A B C's of the art. The boatswain, blowing lustily upon a tin pipe, encouraged their efforts with shrill music of his own composing, the one virtue of which was that it seemed to be endless.

But even boatswains tire; and at length, with a final, wailing note, the measure lost itself amongst

the sails and shrouds. The beef-eaters subsided, puffing vigorously, upon a coil of rope in the shelter of the weather rail, and Adam cleared his throat for a song.

“ In the Northern sea I loved a maid,
As cold as a polar bear,
But of taking cold I was not afraid—
Sing too rel le roo,
And the wine is red—
For a kiss is a kiss, most anywhere,
When a man's heart goes to his head.

Ho ! the heart of a man is an onion, boys,
An onion, boys, with a shedding skin.
And it never gets old, for you off with its hide,
When you meet a new love, and its fresh within !

In the southern sea I loved a lass,
As warm as a day in June ;
And oh that a summer should ever pass—
Sing too rel le roo.
And the wine is red—
For my summer, my lads, was gone too soon,
With a man's heart gone to his head.

Ho, the heart of a man, etc.

In the Western seas I loved a miss,
As shy as the sharks that swim ;
And it's duties we owe to the art of the kiss—
Sing too rel le roo,
And the wine is red—
If a maiden so shy should be took with a whim,
And a man's heart gone to his head.

Ho, the heart of a man is an onion, boys,
An onion, boys, with a shedding skin.
And it never grows old, for you off with its hide,
When you meet a new love, and it's fresh within !”

There were more of these verses; one to fit every sea, of which there be more than seven, as the song proved. The beef-eaters and Captain Phipps joined in the chorus; for the boatswain, having caught the lilt of the song, gave it a rare flavor of music with his piping.

At the wheel, the second mate had jammed a marlin spike between the spokes, to hold the brig on the wind, and sitting cozily down had gone fast asleep. The lookout aloft, absorbed in the singing, relaxed his watchfulness, and beat time with a heavy fist on the edge of the crow's nest. Time passed, the songs ceased, talk died away. With strange whisperings, the waves slipped by, and the soft wind hummed sleepily through the rigging.

A cry cut through the night. A cry of such intensity of alarm, that, on the instant, there was a scurrying of feet and a rush to the rail. A few cable lengths away, a black craft, with never a light, came sizzling the brine in her speed, and bore down upon the "Spencer" with dire intent.

The boatswain's pipe shrilled its wild warning, while Adam and Phipps bounded towards the armory, yelling the word that a pirate was upon them. Like some incantation of marvelous potency, their cries summoned men, like crowding gnomes, from hatches, companion-ways and fo'castle.

The brig's deck swarmed with sailors running aimlessly hither and thither; shouting, stumbling, swearing, till Phipps and Rust reappeared from the direction of the armory, with their arms full of cutlasses, pistols and muskets, and threw them with a great

clatter upon the planking. As they scrambled to arm themselves, there was a crunch, the brig shuddered beneath their feet, and 'grappling-hooks' hurtled through the air from over the pirate's gunwale, and fell clanking across the rail. The raiders pulled the lines taut, and the vessels were bound firmly together.

A black cascade of men came leaping from the high deck of the buccaneer and landed heavily upon the "Spencer." Their pistols blazed yellow exclamation points of fire, as they stumbled to their feet. Then, with clash of steel on steel, Rust, Phipps, and a half score of the sailors, rushed upon the invaders, and a mad *mêlée* ensued.

Rust was conscious of a few things about him in the confusion. He thought how cold the naked blades looked, slashing in the moonlight; above the yells and curses he heard the slapping of a sail, sounding a weird alarm; he felt the appalling strength of the big rascal, who was cutting at him with that brute force and disregard for skill which is so deadly to engage. He thought the fellow would surely slice his sabre in two, and lost no time in feinting. The brute of a buccaneer lurched forward, intent on sending his blade through Adam's body with one mighty sweep; when, with the speed of light, a moonbeam seemed to circle through the air, and bury itself with a sharp slapping sound in his hairy neck. He dropped his sword; spun half about, with his head hanging sideways, and went down.

Adam rushed to the taffrail. The pirate ship was straining at the ropes on the grappling irons which

held the two hulls together. Furiously he slashed at the taut lines, till they parted. The black craft drifted away, as a wide lane of water grew between the two vessels. From the decks of the sea-robber, the buccaneers, seeing their prey slipping from them, yelled a discordant chorus of curses.

Back into the fight he darted. The din was greater than ever, as wounded men, blind with rage, rushed at one another with mad fury. Pistoling a creature who came running upon him, Adam heaved his body overboard, and was soon in the thick of the *mêlée* once more.

The sailors of the "Spencer" had had somewhat the best of the conflict. Less than a score of the pirates had been able to leap aboard before the vessels drifted apart; and their bawlings for help had been rendered useless by Adam's prompt action in cutting the lines. They, however, were well-versed in fighting, whereas the crew of the brig were merely rough-and-tumble sons of Cain, whose willing rage was their principal accouterment. They went at their adversaries hammer and tongs. They wrestled with some, hacked at others, swore at all. Phipps, like the sturdy woodsman from Maine that he was, hewed his way from one group to another, shouting hoarsely to hearten his men. The beef-eaters, as inseparable as when they were dancing in the moonlight a few hours before, always chose one man between them; and peeled him to a horrid core, as he rushed upon their sharpened weapons.

Despite the losses on either side, the scene was still one of mad activity, for the robbers not already done

for, had backed against the masts, the capstan, or the rail, and were fighting with the fury born of desperation. Over the reddened decks wounded creatures crawled, whining and gory. Swords and pistols lay everywhere. One dying brute sprawled with arms extended, his index finger crooking, and straightening, and crooking again; as though he were beckoning death to come more quickly.

The sails began to slap at the masts, as the brig swung into the wind, and stopped in stays. Croaked curses from the pirate craft, which was again drawing near, gave warning that swift action was imperative. Fired by the same thought, Adam and Phipps ran together to the brig's gun. Rust had filled his pouch with loose powder. The cannon was already loaded. Swiftly he primed the vent, and he and Phipps, with the combined strength of two giants, slewed the piece about till a ball from the pirate could have been tossed into its yawning muzzle.

The robber craft missed her mark, and came up in stays just as the "Spencer" got again on the wind. Her bows were almost in touch with the brig. At once Adam saw that if the gun was fired at its present elevation it would fail to sweep the deck of the enemy. With a sudden impulse he leaped astride its smooth brass nose and bore it down, just as the cook, who had been watching the gun, rushed from the galley with a shovelful of blazing coals, and turned it upside down over the primed vent. There was a deafening roar. The concussion shook the ship. The brass piece leaped backwards, like a bucking horse, and Rust went sprawling on the deck, for the sharp recoil

had left him with no support. The shot tore a hole, the size of a hogshead, in the starboard bow of the pirate vessel, and squarely on the water-line. As she came about in the wind, the sea rushed into her hold in a torrent.

A dreadful silence ensued. Then a moan from a dying wretch upon the "Spencer's" deck seemed to touch into being a bedlam of yells from the doomed vessel; where the murderous crew, though armed to the teeth, yet found themselves sinking defenseless to their death.

With the cannon's smoke still about her like a shroud, she drifted away, rising and falling sullenly to the seas; till at length her stern rose high, and with a strange, sucking sound, that rose above the shrieks of the wretches upon her deck, she disappeared.

Meantime the "Spencer" was scudding bravely away, adown the boulevard of silver which the moon had flung across the restless sea.

CHAPTER XVIII.

THE GLINT OF TREASURE.

THE brig "Captain Spencer," came duly to her goal at the green Bahamas. What with wounds received from the pirates, who had called so unceremoniously, and from sea-sickness, which they always had, the beef-eaters were glad of the sight of land. Phipps and Rust were filled with rejoicings by reason of the dreams they had of thrusting a naked arm apiece into the sea and fetching up handfuls of gold with which to return to two sweet women in Boston.

All hands were presently doomed to disappointment. Phipps learned that his treasure-ship was indeed a fact, but that she was small, both in tonnage and her burden of Spanish coins, that she lay in many fathoms of water and that, indeed, she was scarcely worth serious attention.

Phipps was, however, a popular man at these bits of jeweled land in the emerald sea. He had traded there on several occasions, making friends always. Thus it came that a hobbling old salt, whom he had befriended in a scrimmage, consoled him with the information of a large treasure-ship, sunk somewhere in the neighborhood of Hispaniola. He resolved at once to pursue this matter to the end, for which purpose the "Captain Spencer" would be wholly inadequate, as the Spanish

Main was as filled with pirates as the sky may be of buzzards over dying caravans.

With the approval of the entire party, the brig was now headed for England, Adam and Phipps feeling confident of their ability to secure a larger ship for their enterprise.

On familiar soil when the "Spencer" at length came to anchor, off the tower of London, in the Thames, Adam had little difficulty in finding a market for the brig. With the proceeds of the sale in his pockets, William Phipps, under Adam's tuition, blossomed out as a gentleman of no little personal attractiveness. Adam, as one born to the purple, donned a handsome attire and swaggered with all the elegance of a prince.

He was soon in the midst of his former acquaintances, with one of whom he fought a duel at the end of the first week, requiring his vanquished foe, who was only sufficiently wounded to be satisfied, to kneel in humility and to wipe the victor's blade clean of his own red juice, on the hem of his coat.

Rust until now had never had occasion to regret the disfavor in which Charles Stuart held him, since a certain distinguished lady had declared the "Sachem" to be vastly more entertaining than his Majesty with ready narratives. However, he was undismayed, for with James, fated so soon to be king, he was amazingly friendly.

William Phipps, for his part, needed but one introduction and no recommendation. Above all things temporal, James reveled in naval adventure. Blunt, gallant Captain Phipps appealed to him instantly. The

tale of the treasure-ship set him aflame with eagerness to go with this adventurous company to the western Indies, where he could readily picture himself, Phipps and Adam fighting their way to the rotting strongholds of the Spanish galleon, sunk there half a century before.

With an alacrity which was of a highly complimentary character to Phipps and Rust, the Prince procured a fine vessel, the "Rose-Algier," with a crew of ninety-five men and an armament of eighteen guns, and gave her into the trust of his friends for their enterprise. It was agreed that inasmuch as he thus found the ship and the expenses of the venture, he should have ninety per cent. of whatsoever treasure should be recovered, Phipps declaring for himself and Adam how contented they would be with the remaining one-tenth.

Late in the year, which was 1684, the "Rose-Algier" bore away for Hispaniola, Phipps, Adam, and the faithful beef-eaters, whom seasickness nor peril could drive from Adam's side, soon beginning to wonder what manner of crew it was with which they had shipped. A few weeks later, King Charles the Second died. James ascended the throne. Thus the treasure-seekers were backed by the English monarch and his government.

A sunken ship has frequently proved to be a small thing, and the ocean a large one, to the seeker, eager for its cargo. The "Rose-Algier" dipped into all manner of harbors and her master asked all manner of people all manner of questions, to no avail. The months slipped by, in this tedious occupation, the crew grew weary of a voyage so profitless and so entirely unpromising.

The grumblings of mutiny have a way of keeping below decks, where they simmer volcanically. Nevertheless the beef-eaters heard something of the discontent in the fo'castle, where the ruffians of the crew were for seizing the vessel, running up the black flag and turning pirate forthwith. The Rose was a swift, great bird upon the waves, she was armed to the teeth, she was well provisioned. What more could be desired for buccaneering? And piracy paid its disciples handsomely. Spain and France, particularly, had a hundred argosies in constant flight between the West Indies and home. Gold was the commonest burden of all. Your pirate was a dare-devil, whose life was reputed to be one long round of adventure, drinking and looting. All pirates either died happy or hung, and anything was better than this pothering about in a good ship, seeking for treasure that was sunk admittedly, while millions of treasure was afloat and nearly all to be had for the asking. With precious few exceptions the crew agreed that this was true enough for every practical purpose.

CHAPTER XIX.

MUTINY.

FORTUNATELY mutinies frequently come to a head prematurely. On the "Rose" a jealousy hatched between rival factions of the plotters, so that before they were any of them in actual readiness, one faction, in order to be ahead of and therefore in command over the other, rushed upon the quarter-deck one night and made a sudden descent on Captain Phipps, who happened for the moment to be there alone.

Phipps became renowned for his presence of mind and courage. On this occasion he promptly knocked down three or four of the ruffians, and then with a loaded revolver and a handy marlin spike, he awed the others into submission before the alarm had even time to spread. The malefactors being summarily placed in irons and thrown into the hold, the insurrection below decks retired into the dark corners, to knit itself anew into shape.

The sailors now recognized the necessity for uniting their forces. Moreover, the faction which had been less precipitate, gained the confidence of those half-coward, half-demon followers, or human jackals, who were willing to urge the lions of the fo'castle on to strike the blows of death, content if they could then sneak upon the scene for a feast of remains. Thus a

better plan was laid, while the mutineers dissembled and lulled even the suspicious Phipps into a sense of security that he had not possessed before the overt outbreak, which he had been able to quell single-handed.

The plotters found no opportunity of effecting their designs for several weeks. At length, however, Phipps steered his vessel into a tiny harbor, bitten by the sea into the side of a small, uninhabited island, which was even minus a name. This he did for the purpose of reshipping the stores, in the hold, a recent storm having shifted this cargo until the "Rose" listed to port dangerously, and leaked.

The crew, in silence and obediently enough, constructed a bridge to shore and carried the stores to land, heaping them up in piles, on the beach.

The unlading being accomplished, the crew desired permission to rest in the shade of the near-by woods. This was granted. Once in retirement here, they conceived a plan without delay whereby the ship should fall into their hands that night.

Already they had managed to purloin a complement of arms. They had knives, a few pistols, hatchets and several cutlasses. The stores being ashore, the ship was at their mercy. Their plan was simple enough. They would remain away from the shore until seven o'clock, when they would proceed to the ship in a body, overpower Phipps, Rust, the beef-eaters and the few other faithful souls on board, seize the "Rose" and leave her captain and his friends on the island, to starve. There was but one element lacking—the ship's carpenter. The "Rose" having sprung a leak, in the storm, was regarded by the sailors as no longer

seaworthy, until the carpenter should put her right. He therefore became a necessary adjunct to their numbers.

The carpenter, on being summoned to appear among them by the crew, listened to their plan with horror. However, he was not a coward and he had his wits about him. He nodded as if in approval of the plan, the more readily, perhaps, as he was threatened with death if he dared refuse to become one of the murderous gang. Then he informed them that some of his tools he would much require, to further the plot.

He was sent aboard the ship, with a guard beside him, who had undertaken to see that he permitted no leakage of the crew's little game into the ears of the Captain. However, this carpenter was a man of resources. He was suddenly overpowered by illness, on which pretense he went below. Then, breaking into a run, he came to the Captain's cabin, where Adam was singing the song of his loves. Bidding Rust to continue, as if nothing was happening, he swiftly communicated his news to William Phipps.

"Go back at once and pretend to assist in their deviltry," commanded Phipps. "Make no sign of anything, save compliance with their wishes, and leave the rest to me."

The carpenter rejoined his guard so soon that they were entirely satisfied. They conveyed him ashore, with his tools, and joining their mates again, waited with what patience they could muster, for the fateful hour of seven to arrive.

Phipps had now two hours in which to prepare to defend the ship. Unfortunately some of the guns had

been landed with the stores. Adam volunteered to draw the loads from these, and this he accomplished, with highly satisfactory speed. But it would have been the work of hours to re-transfer the stores to the hold, hence they were left on shore to themselves.

With close on ninety armed, desperate brutes against them, the handful of men on the "Rose" were hardly in an enviable position. The first thing they did was to remove the bridge which had been constructed between the ship and the shore. The remaining guns on board were then dragged and slewed around till they covered the approach from the woods, by which the mutineers would be obliged to come. There was nothing to be done, then, but to wait.

The crew were not disappointing. They appeared duly, their savagery whetted to a fine edge by the burly ruffian who had assumed command of their force. Phipps had prepared his speech. He hailed the men, in his big, gruff voice and commanded them to halt where they were, on pain of instant annihilation.

"Go near the stores," he cried, "and I will blow you in splatters against those trees!"

The cowed scoundrels edged back toward the woods. All the muttered threats of their leader, of what he would do if they refused to charge, were empty to the wretches who could look into the chasm-like mouths of a dozen guns. Their courage oozed out of their veins. They were already defeated.

Phipps, aware that a similar number of dummies would be equally dangerous, now, had his faithful followers run out the bridge again and bring aboard the stores, without which it would have been madness to

sail. This work consumed no small amount of time. But it was finally concluded.

"Now then," said Phipps, when the situation was all in his favor, "I shall pull up anchor and leave you rogues to the fate you had prepared for me. You can stay here and starve and rot!"

This brought the mutineers to tears, and to pleading on their knees. They were willing to come to any nameable terms, if only he would spare them this terrible fate. They threw down their arms, in token of absolute surrender, begging quarter of any description.

Inasmuch as so large a vessel could not have been sailed without a crew, Phipps received them back, the ring-leaders in chains, and doubled the vigor of his mastery.

"But, Adam," he said, "it's no use with these scoundrels. They will drive me back to England yet, with none of the treasure."

Distrustful of the brutes he had between decks, Phipps now sailed for Jamaica, where he quickly discharged nearly every man Jack of his mutinous crew and took on a new lot of sailors. This was not a matter of a few days, it required nearly a fortnight of time, Phipps being exceedingly particular as to the men he selected. In the meantime two things occurred which gave no little anxiety to the treasure-seeking captain. Rust fell ill, with an attack of tropical fever, and a letter arrived from Goodwife Phipps in which she begged to know if her lord and master were still alive, and if so, would he not speedily return to Boston and give no further heed to fortune's beckoning.

William Phipps had seen men sicken and die in these

latitudes. Adam, attended faithfully by the beef-eaters, took the fever lightly, as he seemed to take everything of life. Nevertheless he was weak, when the heat had somewhat abated in his body, and in no fit condition to remain in the tropics.

“Adam,” said the Captain, gravely, having schooled himself for a day and night together for this moment, “I have about concluded that the ‘Rose’ is no longer fit for this service. I shall return to Hispaniola, but unless I shall make out the galleon in a few weeks, I shall sail again to England, for a newer ship.”

“All right,” said Adam. “I shall be ready this afternoon.”

“Well,” said Phipps, hemming and hawing, “the fact is, Adam, you are quite unfit to remain about these islands. Besides, I should be glad of a messenger to send back to Mrs. Phipps in Boston. I would suggest, therefore, that you return thither, on a frigate, sailing to-morrow morning, and if it chance that I go to England and again return to Hispaniola, you could meet me here and help me to find the treasure.”

Rust seemed to hesitate before making his reply. He was sure there was a treasure for him in Boston, but he had begun to have his doubts as to the sunken, or any other sort of available, gold in the Spanish Main. Yet he did not wish to appear eager to abandon the quest, and his heart was above all else loyal to Phipps.

“If I should, by great good fortune, discover the treasure,” continued the Captain, “you shall suffer no loss for your absence, for your services have been ten times over rendered already.”

Much as he was affected by the friendship which

prompted Phipps to assure him of this, Adam was not in the least concerned with thoughts of the treasure, nor influenced by this generous plan which his friend had formulated. But being a reasonable being, in some directions, and being perhaps unreasonably inclined in others, as for instance, toward Massachusetts, he saw the wisdom of the Captain's arrangements, and therefore bade his friend an affectionate farewell, on the following day, and sailed for the north, with the beef-eaters close at his heels.

CHAPTER XX.

GARDE'S EXTREMITY.

HAD prayers been able to reach him and summon him back to Boston, Adam would have been there long before the fever overtook him at Jamaica. Garde, more alone than she had ever been in her life, had appealed to the stars, to the wind, to the tides of the sea, to convey her yearnings to Adam and to bid him hasten to her side. She was alone because she, only, distrusted Randolph. She was alone because she felt no longer the slightest companionship with her grandfather, because even Wainsworth and Tootbaker respected the provisional betrothal she had made with Randolph and because not to Prudence nor even to Goody Dune had she felt she could confide her cares and the breaking of her heart, under the present painful circumstances.

Her distrust of Randolph had grown, despite the fact that, in a measure, the threats against the charter had ceased and a pseudo peace contented the patriots with the thought that their difficulties had been finally remedied by the alliance to which they all now looked forward with abnormal interest and confidence.

Garde had maintained her right of immunity from the attentions of Randolph, consistently and steadfastly. She had never given him the single glance, at Meeting, or elsewhere, for which he was becoming

crazed. The light of malice that burned in his eyes was a thing that Garde felt, occultly. It was a threat to break her will, some day ; it was tigerish in its animal hunger. No creature of prey ever lay in wait for its victim more ready to pounce, to overpower and to drag away to its den the coveted object of its greed and passion.

But the months had winged heavily away on their somber-colored pinions, and the moment for which Garde had hoped, when she set the one year's time of probation had never come—the moment of Adam's return. The second Christmas, so joyless with the Puritans, was far off, with the other departed days of winter. The snow had melted ; the tender shoots of grass were returning, in hordes, like little green armies ; the first buds were breaking the cold, dank soil and peeking forth, while still close wrapped, as if to say : “ Is it time ? ” And only Garde would have pushed them back, only Garde, usually so joyous in the returning of warmth and beauty, would have held to the edge of the mantle of snow, to retain it where it lay.

Her heart was beating like a lead clapper, that tolled against the bell of her soul, day and night, for the fear that was on her of the coming week, when her year of respite would end. Already her grandfather looked at her with fanatical eagerness in his eyes, and rubbed his shaking hands with delight. He had no eyes to see that she was pale, that she started at sounds as she had never done before, fearing that Randolph had come a few days too soon, to claim and to carry her off. The old man's one idea was the safety of the charter. To secure this, no sacrifice could have been

too great. But as a matter of fact, David Donner had no conception of the sacrifice which he was requiring. Such zealots rarely have.

In despair, three days before her dreaded hour should arrive, Garde hastened like a child, afraid of an ogre, to Goody Dune. The evening was cold, for the sky was overcast, the wind was blowing from the north and a few scattered speckles of snow flew spitefully through the air.

"B-u-h-h—it's cold! B-u-h-h—it's cold!" said the jackdaw, when Garde came in at the door. The bird was echoing the past winter's history of what poor old Goody had suffered, alone in her hut.

"Well, dearie," said the old woman, who was evidently making preparations to go out, on some mission of her own, "you look as if you too are in need of some of the simples you gathered in the summer."

"It is nothing simple that I need," said Garde. "I have come for wisdom and help. Oh, Goody, I don't know what I shall do. I wish so I had come to you sooner!"

"You must stop trembling first," said Goody. "Here, take this cup of tea. It is going to be a bitter night."

She had prepared the drink for herself, to fortify her meager warmth of body against the wind, into which she expected to go on an errand, presently.

"It is not from the cold; it is inside that I am trembling," confessed the girl. But she took the cup, obediently. "If you can do nothing to help me, I could wish the cold would never let me go back to my home!"

"There, there, drink the tea," said Goody, after

giving her one penetrative glance. For young women to feel that terrible demi-mania of desiring self-destruction was not new to Goody Dune. She had gone through the stages herself. She knew almost exactly the conditions which universally promote the emotion in the young of her sex.

"I know that Adam has never returned," she said, slowly. "You have had no word, even. I have seen that in your eyes. But, dear me, have you no abiding faith and hope, child? In the spring——"

"Oh it isn't that, Goody!" broke in Garde. "I could wait—I could wait for him fifty years, patiently—yes, patiently. I love him. But you don't know what has happened. I have never told you. What was the use! They made me promise;—and if Adam knew—he might never come back. No—he would not come back. And I love even the very places where his shadow fell, in the forest—and the log he was sitting on. I love the gate where his hands rested—I love everything he ever touched!" Her hands pressed upon her bosom, where, beneath her frock, she wore the brooch from Hispaniola.

Goody had never seen her in such a mood. She had never heard such passion from her lips. But by the memory of her own heart-break, she caught at the sinister cry of something promised.

"And have you given yourself in promise to somebody else?" she asked, quietly, but somewhat severely.

"Grandther forced me. What could I do?" said Garde, feverishly. "What could anybody do, with the charter being taken away? If I could save it, I ought to save it! But he will never, never keep his word!

He is deceiving them all,—I feel it! I know it! He is a wicked man! But you will tell me what to do. You must tell me what to do!”

“Sit down, dearie,” said the old woman, calmly. “You must tell me all about it. I cannot prescribe, even simples, until you let me know what you are driving at, you know. Now who is this he, through whom you are to save the charter?”

“I don’t know how it ever happened,” said Garde. “He was always known to be the enemy of the colony, but he did something to Grandther, who has never been the same man since Mr. Randolph——”

“Edward Randolph!” interrupted Goody, with a sudden vehemence, the like of which she had never before betrayed to Garde. “Did you say Edward Randolph? Have you promised to marry him, to save the charter? There, there, sit down and tell me your story, quietly. Only, do make haste.”

Garde wondered, momentarily, at the old woman’s abrupt outburst. It served to give her a new hold on herself, for it broke her own morbid thought and excitement. She told Goody what had happened to mar her happiness almost before Adam’s kiss had ceased to burn on her fingers. She told it brokenly, incoherently, for she knew all the details of the story so vividly that she could not realize that Goody was not also in possession of the entire fabric of thoughts and struggles which had brought about her grandfather’s cherished end. However, Goody Dune was a woman, and quick-minded and astute at that. She patched as rapidly as Garde gave her the irregular fragments of the tale. She had shut her mouth tightly at the end of her own

outburst, and it seemed to Garde her lips had grown harder since. Her eyes were certainly snapping crisply. Goody was aroused.

"Come with me," she presently said, interrupting Garde's outpourings again. "When you came I was starting to go where it would be well for you to follow, before the hour grows later."

"But, Goody, won't you tell me what to do?" said Garde, in anguish.

"You will know what to do, when you go home," said the old woman, somewhat grimly. "I know Edward Randolph by his works."

She led the way out into the gathering twilight without further delay. Garde shivered a little, as the cold wind struck her again, but she followed, eagerly, with wonder in her heart and a little awe of Goody, in her tortured mind. What could the old woman mean? Where could she now be hastening?

Goody proceeded with a straightness that argued familiarity with the route, and fixity of purpose in her mind. She went by alleys that led down toward the water, where fisher-folk had builded little shanties on the rocks above the roar of the harbor breakers.

"I am taking you to see another young woman," she said. "She was pretty too, and she had no parents. Her mother died five years ago, and her father, James Hodder, was lost in the storm, last spring. She was an easy prey, you see. Poor Hester! and only fifteen."

Garde looked at the old woman in wonder. All this half muttered preface to something coming, served to make her heart beat so hard that she could hear it, painfully.

"What is it about her?" she asked, breathlessly.

Goody made no answer. She had reached the door of one of the huts, and pushing it open she entered, Garde, pale and large-eyed, close behind her.

"Ned—oh Ned!" came a half sob, half chortle of joy from somewhere in the darkness of the place. Garde felt shivers go down her entire form.

"Not Ned yet, my love," said Goody, in a voice so cooing that Garde hardly knew it. "Presently, dear, presently. He is sure to come back to-night. Dear me, we must have a light and see how we're doing."

Garde had heard a little moan which Goody's cooing had not sufficed to smother. Then there had been the sound of a stifled sob. Goody went to the dying embers in the chimney-place, to get a light for a tallow dip on which she had put her hand with unerring familiarity with the furnishings of the place. The voice, with tears and patience in its syllables, came again:

"He will come—back, to night? He—didn't come—last night. He hasn't—come for a—week."

"Oh yes, he will surely come to-night," crooned Goody, at the fireplace. "But how is the little dollie?" Garde was leaning back against the door, heavily. Her eyes were staring into the utter darkness with which the place was filled. She felt the presence of a woman on a bed of motherhood. She was ready to sink on the floor, with terrible apprehensions. The woman on the bed made some heroic effort to calm herself, and to answer Goody's question.

"She's sleeping," she said. "She was so cold, but I have got her warm again."

The tallow dip now flared. Goody shielded it cau-

tiously as it sputtered and then she arose to her feet. Between her fingers the light spread, throwing great, grotesque shadows of her hand on the walls, in one direction and a larger adumbration of her head in the other. Garde saw the couch, which she had known was in the corner. She also saw a white face, too thin to be pretty, and all of a soul's being and anguish concentrated in two great eyes. Her own eyes were blazing with the emotions by which she was possessed. As if there had been some great affinity between them, the young woman on the couch was looking at Garde the moment the dip illumined the room.

"Who's that?" said the startled Hester on the couch.

"A friend, a friend, dear," said Goody. "I brought her to see you. She knows Edward."

"She—she knows Ned?" said the wasted young mother, raising herself up, abruptly. "Let me see her. Oh, oh,—you are so pretty! But you won't take him away from me—you won't take him, please? He does really love me—he didn't mean what he said. He must love me, now. He hasn't seen our little baby, or he would love me more than anything in the world. You wouldn't take him away from me—now?"

As Hester sat there, propped up by one thin, white arm, brushing her hair from her face and leaning eagerly toward her visitor, Garde could only put her hand to her cheek and shake her head. Her bosom rose and fell in the agitation which was shaking her whole being.

"Oh, I am so glad—oh, I knew you wouldn't," said the girl on the couch. "You couldn't have the heart, could you? See—see!"

Weakened as she was, she made a great effort to rally her strength and dragged a little bundle forth from between the blankets and her own throbbing bosom, where she had kept it partially warm. She was stifling sobs all the time she was speaking. Her nerveless fingers sought in the folds with instinctive tenderness, to uncover a tiny face, as immobile as marble. "It's our little child," said the mother. "She looks so like him. He would have to love me now—you see he couldn't help it."

Goody took the babe in her arms. Garde saw everything. She saw the tidy poverty of the hut. She saw the ghost of the girlish beauty, which this abandoned mother had once possessed. She saw the young creature tuck in, next her bosom, ecstatically, a worn-out stocking—a man's stocking.

Garde wanted to flee, but Goody brought her the babe—a little doll indeed. Goody took her hand, for Garde seemed stricken with helplessness, and placed it lightly on the tiny, white face of the child. The girl drew it away with a shudder. The babe was dead.

"Go home, dearie," said Goody, in a croon. "You will know what to do. God makes few of the marriages laid at His door, but He does make some of these. Hester has a right to believe He made her a wife—else why a mother?"

Garde opened the door and ran out, glad, oh so glad it was cold!

CHAPTER XXI.

RANDOLPH'S COURTSHIP.

GARDE fled home as if some unthinkable fate were in pursuit. She was haunted by the look she had seen in the eyes of that girl-mother, back in the hut. She could hear the young thing still begging her not to rob her of the man who had taken her all and given her an ineradicable shame in exchange.

Yet beneath every other emotion, Garde felt a sense of exultation. The estimate of her instinct was confirmed—Randolph was perfidy itself. Not a soul among the Puritans, she believed, could do aught but support her against this man. And if only she could wrench herself free, how gladly would she welcome the penance of waiting years for Adam, in payment for her act, which she felt was disloyalty, in consenting to the provisional betrothal into which she had been forced !

Her grandfather now would have to be the first to protect her from the dread fate which had come so near, she thought. To confuse politics and the personal affairs of her narrow life is the privilege of the sex to which Garde belonged. She planned, as she darted through the wind-swept streets. She would tell it all to Grandther Donner, and then he should save her the ordeal of meeting Edward Randolph in any manner whatsoever. She gave no thought to the charter, nor to

what the man with the power he wielded would do in revenge to their liberties, now that he would find himself baffled, at the end of his term of waiting.

She yearned for Adam. She could tell him, now, what she had been driven to do, whereas before this she had always wished him to come, yet had shrunk from the thought of confessing what she had permitted to be done. Yes, she could lay it all bare before him now, and fairly scourge herself with her own reproaches, joyously. What an exquisite pleasure it would be to ask his forgiveness thus, and not at first receive it, and then at last be taken home to his arms and his love ! For her thoughts, her heart-beats, her soul's longings had all been constant to him, and to him alone. She would like to tell him all this. And she would let him kiss her, now. For through what hours had she wished, when she had thought they might never meet in that way again, that his kiss had been placed upon her lips that day of their parting. She almost frightened herself with the thought of how that one kiss on her fingers might have been his only kiss. But the next moment she tingled with ecstasy, to think she was free and that some day he would come back, and then she would know how to love him and to cherish him as never before she could have known.

Thus glowing one moment, with love's own reveries, and chilling the next, with sudden reminders of what had just been and what might still be, she reached her grandfather's house, where she had been staying with the old man for the past year, with only rare visits to the Soams. She went in by the kitchen door. This apartment being dark, she passed through to the dining-

room, which was lighted but unoccupied, hence she continued on to the parlor, where she fancied she heard voices. Entering here, she could have fallen to the floor in sheer astonishment and fright.

She found herself confronting her grandfather and Edward Randolph himself.

"Ah, here she is, you see," said David Donner, rubbing his hands together, delightedly. "I thought she couldn't be far away. My child, Mr. Randolph has come to have a little chat. Natural enough, I should think." He chuckled with pleasure, adding: "Dear me, I mustn't forget to cover my rose, on a night like this." With fatuous smiles, that ill suited his grim old visage, he quitted the room, in a sprightly, playful manner, and left Garde facing Randolph, alone.

"Good evening, Mistress Merrill," said the man, fastening the hungry gaze of his deep-set eyes upon her face. "I am glad to see you looking so well."

"Good evening, sir, and thank you," said Garde, in a voice scarcely audible. She had become suddenly pale. She trembled. She looked at the man as one fascinated by a baleful point of light.

"It seemed but reasonable that I should call and see you, since our betrothal is so soon to end in our marriage," said Randolph, moving slowly toward her, as if to prolong his own anticipation of standing where he could reach her at last. "I have been very patient, have I not, my pretty sweetheart?"

"You—have been very—patient," echoed Garde, helplessly and panting like a spent doe, to catch her breath.

"And I have kept my word," he went on, still slowly

approaching. "Massachusetts has her charter, and now—I have my wife."

He put out his hand, like a talon, to clutch her fast.

One convulsive shiver seemed to break the spell which had held Garde enthralled. She leaped away, her eyes blazing, her lips quivering, her frame shaken with emotion.

"No!" she cried. "No! Don't touch me! Keep away! I loathe you! I know what you are! Keep away,—I can't bear you!"

"What's this?" said the man, scowling, till his great brow threw a sinister shadow as far down as his cheek bones. "Have a care, my dear Garde. We made our bargain a year ago. This is no time for kittenish pranks. Come back here where you were."

His tone was authoritative. The gleam in his eyes was a warning against disobedience. But Garde could be no further frightened than he had made her by his mere presence. She stood there, alert for the first sign which would send her running, if need be, to jump through the window.

"I shall never touch you, nor go near you!" she said. "There is no bargain between us. I would rather die than to be your wife! I know what you are, I say. I have been to Hester Hodder's, to-night! I have seen her. I know what you are!"

Randolph took hold of his lip and pinched it viciously. He glared at the girl in silence, for a moment. "This has nothing to do with me," he said. "You have made some mistake."

"I made a terrible mistake when I first submitted to

this loathsome plan," said Garde, gaining courage as she spoke. "I always distrusted you, despised you. Do you think I would trust a man to save our charter who wouldn't save a woman's honor—who would do what you have done? You may go—you may go away! I loathe you! I scorn you! Oh, I have found you out in time!"

"This is silly talk, Mistress Merrill," said the man. "I know nothing of your Hester Hodder."

Garde made a gesture expressive of disgust and impatience.

"But all this has no bearing on anything one way or the other," Randolph continued. "You must not forget that I have as much power over the charter and the colony as ever—in fact, more. I have become the friend of these people, but you can make me their enemy with a very little of your nonsense. Come, now, let us be two sensible beings and not begin our union by quar——"

"If you have had any power to do us injury," interrupted Garde, "we will find it done. You wouldn't dare to trust yourself. I have a fear, such as I never had before, of the harm you have doubtless done this colony, darkly, in the year just passed."

Garde had a way, fairly uncanny, of saying terrible truths, as if from some sort of inspiration, which came upon her unawares. Randolph had his pockets full of documents, at that moment, which lay there like a mine of explosives, ready to shatter the charter and government, almost at his whisper of command. His mind could conceive of nothing so exquisite in treachery, to these people that he hated, and in vengeance against

Garde, for the attitude she had always assumed toward him, as to marry her first and then to destroy the charter afterward. This had been his dream for more than the year. He had waited for its climax as patiently as a cat will wait before a hole till the mouse shall reappear. Garde's words were as so many poignards, only that they failed to strike him in a fatal spot. They stung him to greater fury than he had ever felt and to a hotter determination to humble the girl and to reduce Massachusetts to abject servility and despair.

The man saw that this was an ill time to threaten Garde. She was not made of the wax which his sophistries had substituted for the metal once in David Donner's composition.

"You have entertained some strange ideas of me, Mistress Merrill, for which I am at a loss to account," he said, more quietly. "I feel sure we merely misunderstand each other. Have I not shown, for a year, that my one wish is to prove myself a staunch friend of these good people and worthy of your esteem? I am willing to do anything further, if you can think of anything you would like to suggest, before we are married."

"We shall never be married," said the girl, self-possessed, now, and calm enough to be fairly judicial. "If you wish to win my respect, go and marry Hester Hodder, and let your child not be buried in shame."

The man winced, but not visibly. He took his lip in his fingers again and pinched it till it was white. He realized that in her present frame of mind, Garde was utterly incorrigible. He only made matters worse by remaining where she was. He knew of a trick worth

two of prolonging this interview. Yet he must retire in good order.

"I must tell you once more," he said, "that I know nothing about this person of whom you speak. I regret that something has prejudiced your mind against me, especially when you insist upon doing me this wrong. Let me say good night, for I am sure I shall find you in an altered mood to-morrow."

"Good night," said Garde, icily.

The man smiled and went out, closing the door as if it had been the bars of a cage, which he had dared to enter, at the risk of frightening his prey to death.

He went out into the garden and called to David Donner.

CHAPTER XXII.

DAVID'S COERCION.

DAVID DONNER came in from that interview in the garden an angered fanatic. The bitter cold of the night had entered into his soul, with all the heaped-up threats which Randolph had hurled at his head.

These threats had not been fired at David loudly nor fiercely. Randolph had told him of Garde's insubordination, of her charges and of her repudiation of her promise. He had shown that whether her allegations as to Hester Hodder were true or false, they had nothing to do with Massachusetts politics. He had then opened up with his main battery—a recital of the power he had steadily accumulated, during the past year, and of his intention to use it, immediately, if Donner and Garde now failed in the slightest particular to keep their share of the bargain.

Donner became nearly crazed. For a year he had dwelt with fondness upon the topic of the charter and of how he had saved it, until nothing else could get foothold in his mind. Indeed he had become mildly insane upon the subject. He had counted the days, and finally the hours waiting for the final ratification of the contract with Randolph, whose influence with King James had exceeded even that which he had ex-

exercised when Charles sat upon the throne. To reflect that now, at the eleventh hour, the mere whim of a silly girl could destroy this whole fabric and sweep away their jealously guarded liberty and independence, at a single breath, nearly made a maniac of the old man.

Hester Hodder was as nothing. A hundred such women, with their dead babes, would have been as nothing, compared to the safety of the charter. What had Garde been born for, if she was not to save the day, when her promise was made and when she alone stood between ruin and the colony? What was her girlish folly, that it should stand in the path forbidding the colony its existence? What should be her very life, when the matter against it weighed so ponderously?

Thinking what his compatriots would say, if they should learn of this latest turn of affairs, Donner wrung his hands in agony, and then clenched them in rage. For twenty years the charter had fluttered between life and death. For the last year it had gained in strength till it seemed that all danger had passed. No religious fanaticism, no zeal of inquisitions ever possessed a man's soul, heart and brain more thoroughly than his patriotism possessed Grandfather Donner.

When he went into the house, his trembling, bony hands were as cold as those of a skeleton. He was half crying, with his utter vexation and fear for the charter, and yet he ground his teeth, in his anger and stubborn determination to compel his grandchild to adhere to her promise. When he came to where Garde was awaiting his return indoors, she mistook the mad light in his eyes for righteous indignation at Ran-

dolph's perfidy, of which she believed he had become apprised.

"Oh, Grandther," she said, running trustingly toward him and beginning already to cry, from her stress of emotions. "I am so glad you have come back to protect me!"

"Protect you? Protect you?" he almost screamed, clutching her by the shoulders, so fiercely that the cold and the pain which he caused seemed to penetrate her through and through. "What madness have you committed? What have you done? The charter,—the charter—the charter!—you shall save the charter! Do you hear me? You shall keep your promise and save the colony!" He shook her till the girl was gasping. She could think of nothing but a hideous nightmare.

"Oh, he hasn't told you, Grandther," she cried. "If you knew the truth you would turn him from the door! I have seen poor Hester and her baby. I cannot bear to think of him—I should die!"

"You—you—you traitor!" stammered the old man, in his mania. "You—you betray the colony! You are mad, mad! You promised. You made your own conditions. You have deceived me. You would play us false, now—now, when our liberties are taking heart. But you shall not! What? You come home here with this silly story, you—you, the daughter of a Donner—and ready to tear up the charter for your silly notions. No—no! no! no!—you shall marry this man! You shall keep this your bargain! The charter—you shall save the charter!"

"Oh, but, Grandther, the story is true," said Garde,

wringing her hands. "He is the one that is false. And I thought you would hold me too precious for such a thing as——"

"Enough!" commanded the crazed old man. "My word—the colony's word—has been given. The bargain shall be kept. This has gone too far already. To think that for one moment you would so jeopardize the charter! I am stricken with shame at your want of honor at this crisis of our liberties!"

Garde still failed to believe she heard her grandfather correctly. She still hoped his impatience would abate sufficiently for her to tell of what she had seen. It could not be possible that a Puritan, so high-minded and strict for moral conduct, could know what she knew and still insist upon this infamous marriage. To her, at that moment, it was virtue and honor that were all important to be saved, the charter and the colony that had become insignificant.

"If you had touched that little dead baby," she said. "If you had heard Hester begging, Grandther—oh, you would have kept your promise,—you would never coerce me in this terrible——"

"Stop! stop!" cried Donner, madly, angered almost beyond control by this appeal, which was so unbearably remindful of her mother. "I have not coerced you, never! You made your promise freely. The honor of the colony, and more than that, the safety of the charter, now hang upon your faith in keeping your own agreement. And you shall keep it—for the family pride—for the colony's good name! This story—what is the woman?—what is her child?—what is anything, when our liberty and independence trem-

ble in the balance? No more—I'll hear no more of this,—not a word!"

Garde brushed a wisp of her red-black hair from her forehead. Her great brown eyes were fastened wide open by amazement. Her lips alone contained any color. How red they seemed against the white of her oval face! Her eyebrows seemed like two curved black brands on her brow. She looked at her grandfather in silence. It was positively incredible that he had said what she had heard, she thought. If Hester and her child and "everything" were held of so little worth, why—what of herself? Had it come to this? Was it admittedly and shamelessly a sacrifice of her very soul, to a creature only waiting to have his way first before destroying the charter later?

To the pure, natural mind of the girl, Randolph had become as translucent as water, in his plotted perfidies. It appeared impossible that any man could still believe in his lies. She would have spoken of this, but the sight of the fanatical old man before her, sealed her lips. She recognized the light in his eyes at last. At any other moment her pity would have fluttered forth to him, yearningly, her little mother instinct would have taken her on the wings of concern to smooth the care-channeled wrinkles from his brow, but now all these tenderer emotions had fled away, in fear and awe. She said nothing further. There was nothing left to say, nothing that would have any weight against mania. At length even her gaze fell before the wild look with which David Donner confronted her, insanelly.

"Now then," said the old man, at length, in a voice

made raucous by his recent passions, "you may go to bed and prepare your mind for obedience."

"Good night, dear Grandther," said Garde, by force of habit, and with nothing more, she passed from the room.

CHAPTER XXIII.

GOODY'S BOY.

THE right of Spring to exercise idiosyncrasies of weather was conceded, doubtless, by the first man. Spring is well known to be female, for this very proclivity of changing her mind as to what she will do next. Having been a spitfire nearly all night, Spring smiled in the morning, as balmy as if she had caught the fancy of some tropical zephyr, that hastened rashly northward to catch her for a kiss.

The first ray of the sun found itself entangled in the hair of Mistress Merrill. Garde had not slept during the night. She had not gone to bed, nor had she prepared her mind for obedience to her grandfather's commands. She had spent the hours sitting at the window, waiting for the morning.

She now sped swiftly through the unawakened streets, a prey to a sense of fear that she was being pursued. From time to time she cast a quick glance across her shoulder, but there was no one following. There was hardly a sound, save that a few birds—hardy little scouts, ahead of the northward-creeping caravan of summer—twittered and set up rival centers of melody in the trees.

There was no hesitation in the girl's footsteps. She

knew where she was going. Goody Dune's was the only place where she could go, with her present resolutions. She had come to a logical conclusion, as to what was now to be done, shortly after leaving David Donner. Her mouth was firmly set, where determination had come to abide.

As always, she found Goody stirring about, with her door wide open, when she came to the tidy little home. Goody beheld her coming before she reached the gate. Peering into her face knowingly, the old woman gave a little shake to her head. She was adept at deciphering the hieroglyphics which human emotions write upon brows and lips and eyes, especially in the faces of the young.

"So your grandfather insists and you are going to run away?" she said, as Garde came eagerly up the garden path to the door.

"Yes," said Garde, in some awe of the wise old woman and her means of acquiring knowledge, "and I want you to help me,—oh, you must help me—just as fast as you can! How did you know?"

"I could see that you were deeply troubled, and I know exactly what a girl like you would do," said Goody. "I was the same kind of a girl, once, myself. Now tell me, first, where are you going."

"I don't know," said Garde, "I think to Plymouth, to my aunt Rosella."

"You would do well to make up your mind on that point," said Goody. "And how are you going, shall you sail, or ride, or walk?"

"Oh, I shall run," said Garde.

"If you walk it will last longer," said the old woman,

with just a suspicion of a smile. "Then, those two points being settled, have you brought anything to eat, in your pocket?"

"No—no, I didn't wait for anything. I shan't want anything to eat for days. I don't feel like eating, and I don't know when I ever shall."

"And no blankets to sleep in?"

"Oh no, Goody, how could I?" said Garde.

"Let me see; it is something like forty or fifty miles to Plymouth," Goody mused. "Have you thought how it would look if a young woman were seen, running night and day for sixty miles? You know many people walk from Plymouth here."

"Yes," said Garde, eagerly. "That is the only trouble. I want you to do something for me, or tell me what to do. Everybody would see a girl and if Grandther were told, he would have me caught and brought back—and I would rather die!"

Goody laughed at her now, more than half gaily. Her own eyes twinkled with delight over the venture. "What would be the good of all the things my friends have given me, all these years, if I did not use them at such a time as this?" she asked.

"Oh, have you got anything I could really use?" Garde responded. "What is it? What can you do? I mustn't wait,—they will catch me, just as sure as the world!"

"Not if I make you invisible," chuckled Goody. She dived into a chest she had opened and began to paw, in an orderly manner, at a heap of clothing which the box contained. She presently drew forth a complete suit of clothing for a boy. "There," she continued, "go into

the next room and put those on, as fast as ever you are a mind to."

"Those?" said the astonished Garde. "But these are——"

"Yes, I know. They will make you invisible—as a girl. Do you wish to be seen? If not, go and put them on and let me get at something else. We still have other fish to fry."

"But——" started Garde, when Goody pushed her into the next apartment.

Goody continued to rummage in the chest, producing a hat, much the worse for age, a pair of stout shoes, a stick and a large, red handkerchief. Into this handkerchief she knotted a number of slices of bread, some pickles and some cold meat. She then secured it on the end of the stick, and dropped inside it a little wad of money, tied in a parcel by itself.

Garde now returned, blushing as red as a rose and bending her legs inward at the knee most shyly, although anything prettier could hardly be conceived, and there was no one present save the old woman to look, anyway.

"Oh dear me!" said the jackdaw. "Oh dear me!"

"Stand up stiffly on your pins," commanded Goody. "You are not invisible as a girl at all. Come, now, be a man."

"But—Goody——" gasped Garde. "I—I really can't——"

"Yes, you can. You must," corrected the old woman. "Or else you can give up running away altogether."

"Oh no, no!"

"Then do as I tell you. Feet more apart, knees stiff. That's better."

"But, I feel—I feel so—so cold."

"Where, in your face? Nonsense. Now try on this hat."

Goody adjusted the hat. It was much too small to cover all of Garde's glorious hair.

"This will have to come off," said the old woman.

"Oh!" was all Garde could reply.

It did seem a pity, but the business in hand was altogether grim. The scissors snipped briskly. The hat presently covered a quaint, pretty head with close-cropped locks. Garde caught the gleam in Goody's eyes, for Goody could not but admire her for a most handsome and irresistible boy, and again the blushes leaped into her cheeks, and those tell-tale knees began to try to hide one another.

Goody shook her head. "Any one would still know you for Garde Merrill," she confessed, "whether they had ever known you before or not."

"Then what shall I do? I might as well go back to my own clothes," said the girl eagerly.

"You remain where you are," instructed her mentor. "If you are going to run away successfully, you must muster up your courage. But perhaps you prefer to go back to——"

"No! I'll—do anything," interrupted Garde. A sudden horror of the thought of going back, or of being caught and taken back, to Randolph and all the rest of it, put good steel into her shoulders and some also into her legs. "Please make haste and let me be starting," she added. "They may be coming at any moment!"

Goody lost but little time in thinking. She produced a cup, from her shelf of decoctions, and dabbling her finger into its contents she proceeded to stain the girl's face a rich brown color, which made her more handsome than ever, if possible, but which masked her so completely that her own reflection would not have known her. The brown stuff went into her pretty ears and all around her plump pretty throat and even on top of her eyelids as they were closed, for Goody was something of an artist. When she had finished, she regarded her work critically.

"The angel Gabriel wouldn't know you now, himself," she said. "When you wish to get it off, use vinegar. Take your stick and your little pack, put it over your shoulder, so, and now you are ready. Would you like something to eat before you go?"

"Oh no," gasped the girl, frightened half out of her wits, at the prospect of going forth into the world with two pretty, visible legs to walk withal. "I—I couldn't eat anything. I—wait a minute. I—I think I would like a little drink of water."

Goody gave her a dipper full, of which she took one miniature sip.

"Do I—do I look—terrible?" she faltered.

"You look like a farmer's boy—a lout of a country lad," said Goody. "So, good-by, young man. My last word is, forget you have got any legs, or you will surely be detected."

"Legs!" said the jackdaw, glad of a new word. "Legs! Legs!"

"I couldn't—wear anything—over them, could I?"

said Garde, timidly, having jumped when Rex croaked so suddenly.

"You can wear a wedding gown over them, if you prefer," said the old woman, grimly, and suggestively. "I really expected you to do better than this."

"Well—I will!" said the poor child, resolutely. "Good-by, dear Goody. I shall always love you, more than ever, for this."

Goody kissed her, as she bent affectionately forward, and patted her motherly on the back. "That's a good boy," she said.

She opened the door and Garde went forth. The open air made her conscious of her attire instantly. But she did her best, shy and unboyish as the effort was.

"Oh, I forgot to ask," she said, glad to get one more moment in which to get ready. "How is Hester? How was she when you saw her last?"

Goody's face darkened. "I saw her the first thing this morning," she said. "Some one must have called last night, after I left. Hester is dead."

CHAPTER XXIV.

A GREENWOOD MEETING.

ADAM RUST, sailing northward, grew more and more hearty once again with every day, although his pulse-beat quickened almost hourly, with a fever of impatience which began to fasten itself upon him. He was quite himself again, long before the ship arrived at the port of New York. But the beef-eaters were a sorry pair, for the sea still took its revenge upon them for Adam's total disregard of its powers, and the passage had been exceptionally rough.

It was no more than natural that Pike and Halberd, on arriving as far as New Amsterdam, should desire to have done with the boisterous Atlantic. Adam, on the other hand, was in such a fever to go on to Boston that, had no ships been available, and no other means possible, he would have been tempted to swim. As it was, there was no vessel putting for the north to any point beyond Plymouth for a week, so that Adam determined to sail that far and either to catch another captain there, who would convey him onward, or to walk the remaining distance alone.

The beef-eaters, seeming absolutely in need of a rest from their adventures on the water, reluctantly saw the "Sachem" depart without them, they in the meantime remaining with Captain William Kidd, at his New

York home, expecting to go on to Boston with him later. This had been the first time that Rust had been more glad than otherwise to be for a brief season without his faithful followers. But never before had the conditions of his going to Boston been the same.

Thus, on a fine day in April, Adam found himself landed in the old town, of which he had no pleasant memories. He would have confined his inspection of and visit to Plymouth to the docks, had not a hurried tour of inquiry elicited the information that no vessels were due to sail to Boston for two or three days. To remain in the place for such a time as that was not to be thought of on any account.

Providing himself with a small parcel of food, at one of the taverns, Adam was soon striding through a street of the town, which he remembered vividly as one wherein he had walked on a former occasion, as a captive boy, in a procession of fanatical Puritans. The memory was far from being pleasant.

He would have avoided the place, had he known his way sufficiently well, but before he knew it was so very near, he had come to that square in which the stake with King Philip's head upon it had once been set.

He looked at the plain surroundings of the locality with a reminiscence of melancholy stealing upon him. He fancied he saw the precise spot where the stake had stood. It brought back a flood of memories, of his days spent with the Wampanoags, his companionship with King Philip, the war and then the end. The sequent thought was of his first glimpse of Garde, held in her grandfather's arms and looking across the bank

of merciless faces with a never-to-be-forgotten sympathy in her sweet, brown eyes. Dwelling then in fondness upon the recollection of his first meeting with William Phipps, the rover felt that, as his last sadness here had been an augury of better times to come, so this present moment might presage a happiness even greater. With this comforting thought to spur him on to Boston, he quitted the square and was soon leaving the outskirts of Plymouth behind him.

Spring seemed to be getting ready for some great event. She was trimming herself with blossoms and virgin grass, and she was warm with all her eagerness to make herself lovely. Adam opened his mouth to breathe in the fragrance exhaled by flirt Nature. He walked swiftly, for there was resilience under foot as well as in his being.

"If Garde were somewhere near, the day could hardly be lovelier," he said, half aloud. "She must be breathing in this direction."

His glance was invited here and attracted there. Wherever it rested, Nature met it with a smile. Adam felt like hugging a tree, yet no single tree was that elusive spirit of Nature which he so longed to clasp and to hold in his arms. But if he was mocked by the ethereal presence of beauty too diffuse to be held, by a redolence too subtle to be defined, and by bird notes too fleeting to be retained, yet he was charmed, caressed, sublimated by the omnipresence of Nature's loveliness.

At noon he was ten good miles from Plymouth and trailing his sword through a wood, where one could feel that some goddess of intangible and exquisite en-

tity had just escaped being seen, by fleeing into the aisles of the trees, leaving an aroma of warmth, pine-breath and incense to baffle bees behind her. Where a little brook tinkled upon pebbles, for cymbals, he got down on his knees and had a long drink. Hearing voices, where some party seemed approaching, he arose and went forward, presently coming to a cross-road in the forest, where he beheld a scene that aroused his momentary indignation.

It amounted to little. Three young country clods had evidently been pursuing a fourth young fellow, who was scarcely more than a boy, and shorter than any in the group, and now, having come up to him, at the cross-roads, had "cornered" him up against a tree and were executing something like an Indian war-dance about him, as he stood attempting to face all three at once.

They began to yell and to run in at their captive, who was striking at them awkwardly and not more than half-heartedly with a stick, in order, apparently, to prevent them from snatching away his hat. It was entirely too unequal, this sham combat, to accord with Adam's notions of fair play. He started to run toward the group.

"Here!" he shouted. "Here, wait a bit,—I'll take a hand, to make it even."

The youth against the tree saw him coming before the others were aware of his presence. When Adam shouted, however, they turned about quickly enough, and yelling in added delight at being chased, they made off briskly, running back on the cross-road, the way they had come.

Adam strode more leisurely toward the boy who remained leaning, in obvious confusion of emotions, against the tree. He saw a remarkably handsome, brown-complexioned youth, with delicate features, large eyes, that gazed upon him in wonder, and exquisitely rounded legs, one of which was nervously bent inward at the knee.

It was Garde.

Fortunately she had seen him before he came close. Therefore the little involuntary cry of gladness which had risen to her lips, had been too faint for him to catch, at a distance. Then in the moment when her persecutors had been scampering away, she had grasped at the opportunity to control her emotions to the extent of deciding, in one second of timid and maidenly thoughts, that never, never would she reveal herself to Adam, if she could help it, while dressed in these awful garments. She must act the boy now, or she would perish with mortification. Luckily the blush that leaped to her cheeks was masked by Goody's brown stain. Nevertheless she panted with excitement and her bosom would not be quiescent.

"Good morning," said Adam, coming forward and doffing his hat, which he felt that he must do to a youth so gentle and so handsome. "You were making a very pretty fight, but it lacked somewhat of vigor. The next time, slash this way, and that way; guard against assault with your other arm, so, and do your cutting at their heads." He had drawn his sword with which to illustrate, and flourished it lustily at the imaginary enemy, after which he added: "Now then, who are you any way, and where are you bound?"

“Good—good morning,” faltered Garde, in a voice scarcely more than audible. “I am—I am not used to fighting.”

“No, I should say not,” said Adam, trying to make his voice delicate and sweet, in imitation of hers. “You must speak up, boy, the same as you would fight, roaring thus: ‘What ho, varlets!’ on your right, and ‘Have at you, knaves!’ on your left. Shatter my hilt! I haven’t seen so girlish a boy since Will Shakspeare’s play. Stand out here and let us get acquainted, for I think I shall like you, though you do fight and roar so ill.”

Immensely relieved to find that he did not suspect her identity, Garde summoned all the courage which ten days away from home had sprouted in her being. Moreover, she knew that if the deception was to be made successful, she must act her part with all her ability. She therefore left the tree, against which she had continued to lean and stood forth, with what bravery she could muster.

“And who may you be?” she managed to inquire.

“Ha, that’s better,” said Adam. “Don’t be afraid to speak up. A dog that barks at once seldom has need to bite. And you have the making of a man in you yet. You could be taller, but let that pass. You have fine, sturdy legs; your eye is clear. Why, you have nothing to blush for. What ails the lad?”

The red beneath the brown stain was too ardent to be hidden. Garde’s gaze fell before his admiring look.

“You—haven’t told me your name,” she faltered, heroically striving to stand stiffly and to conjure a voice to change the subject withal.

"So I haven't," Adam agreed. "I asked you for yours first, but no matter. I am a mad lover, on my way to Boston. My name is Rust, with a spice of the old Adam thrown in. If you are going in the same direction, I shall be glad of your company."

Garde was going in the same direction. She had never reached so far as Plymouth. Footsore and weary, she had trudged along, going less than ten miles a day, stopping at night with the farming people, the wives of whom she had found most kind, and so at last had arrived at a farm near by these cross-roads, unable to go any further. She had therefore rested several days, and only this very morning she had learned, by word from another traveler, that David Donner, suddenly afflicted by the double woe of finding her gone and himself cursed by Randolph, who had immediately set in motion his machinery for depriving Massachusetts of its charter, was on his back, delirious and ill, perhaps unto death.

She was going back, all contritely, yearning over the old man, who had taken the place of her parents for so many years, and weighted down with a sense of the wretchedness attending life. It was not that her resolution to escape Randolph had abated one particle of its stiffness, that she was turning about to retrace her steps, it was merely that her womanly love, her budding mother-instinct, her loyalty and gratitude for her grandfather's many years of kindness and patience,—that all these made no other thought possible.

And now to learn that Adam was traveling to Boston also, that she should have him for her strong protector and comrade, this filled her with such a gush of delight

that she with difficulty restrained herself from crying, in joy, and the tendency to give up and lean upon his supporting arm.

At sight of him, indeed, before her mortification had come upon her, for the costume, in which it seemed to her she would rather be seen by any other person in the world than Adam, she had nearly run to his arms and sobbed out her gladness. It would have been so wholly sweet to obey this impulse. Her love for the big, handsome fellow had leaped so exultantly in her breast, again to see him and to hear his voice, when she had been so beset with troubles. But she had denied herself splendidly, and now every moment strengthened her determination to play her part to the end. Yet what joy it would be to travel back to Boston, through the greenwood, by his side.

And being not without her sense of humor, Garde conceived many entertaining possibilities which might be elicited from the situation, the standpoint of man to man being so wholly different from anything heretofore presented to her ken.

"Yes," she said, in answer to Adam's last remark, "I am going to Boston—or near there,—but you may find that I cannot walk fast, nor very far, in a day. My walking will doubtless prove to be like my fighting. So that if you are so mad with—with love, and so eager to hasten, perhaps——" and she left the sentence unfinished.

"Well," said Adam, pulling his mustache smartly, "I confess I am a bit hot on foot, and so you would be, young man, if by any good fortune you knew my sweetheart, yet I like you well enough, and my lady has such

a heart that she would counsel me to go slower, if need be, to lend any comfort or companionship to a youth so gentle as yourself."

"I am sure she would," said Garde, readily enough.

"Are you, though? One would think you knew her," said Adam. "Don't plume yourself on this matter so prematurely. Come, let us start."

"One moment, please, till I can tie my shoe," said Garde, who felt such merriment bubbling up in her heart that she was constrained to bend downward to the ground quickly, to hide her smiles.

Adam stood waiting, glancing around at the woods, wondering which way his heart had flown, on its light-some wings, in that temple of beauty. Garde looked up at him slyly. He was dressed in great brown boots, that came above his knees, brown velvet trousers, a wine-colored velvet coat, with a leather jerkin over it, sleeveless and long enough to reach to the tops of his boots, almost, and on his head he wore a large slouch hat, becoming and finishing to his striking figure.

Garde was looking at the back of his head rapturously when he started to turn, to see why she made the tying process so deliberate.

"I am ready," she said, cheerily, springing to her feet. "Is this the road?"

"By all the promptings of my heart, it is," said Adam. "But, by the way, you have not yet told me your name, my boy."

"Oh,—why—why my name is—John Rosella." She had thought of her aunt's first name, on the spur of

the moment, and John had been the simplest and first thing which had popped into her head.

"John Rosella," repeated Adam. "It sounds like Spanish. That would account for your dark complexion." He looked at her critically. "Yes, you are a nice, gentle boy. Have you ever been in love?"

"With—with a girl? never!" said Garde, trembling with delight and fear of being detected, especially if she answered too many questions. "Do tell me all about your lady—lady love."

"That's a bit too precious to tell to any man," Adam assured her, gravely. "And yet, you are so nearly like a girl that I can almost tell you about her."

"What is her name?" asked Garde, catching her breath in little quick gasps.

"Her name? Ah, I hardly tell it to myself, often. But her name would sound sweet in these woods. Her name is—now, mark you, don't you ask me to repeat it again. Never mind her name, anyway. . . . Well, it's Garde. You will have to be contented with that. Ah, but she is the sweetest, most beautiful little woman in the world. Her loveliness goes all through, the same as beauty is everywhere in these woods. It's her nature to be lovely."

His voice became an utterance of melody. It seemed a part of the forest tones. He had taken off his hat, for in his mind Garde stood before him, a smiling dream, even as Garde actually walked beside him, a smiling reality.

"Is she tall?" said Mistress Merrill.

"Yes, somewhat taller than you," said Adam. "Being gentle and likeable you might make one think upon her,

but her voice is sweeter than yours, and, well—she is a girl, and you are merely girlish.”

“Have you loved her long?” said Garde, again casting her gaze upon the ground, as she walked.

“Years!” said Rust. “I have loved her all my life, for I never began to live till I saw her first, and I loved her the moment I saw her.”

“And does she love you?”

“Ah, now you approach forbidden ground. It would be a sacrilege for me to prate—even here in these woods—of her sweet thoughts. I have told you too much already. You are a very devil of a boy, to have gotten so much from me, touching on this subject. I’ll be sworn, I don’t know why I have let you draw me out like this. But I stop you here. It is no concern of yours whether she likes me or not.”

“Oh,” said Garde. Then she added slyly, “I should think she would.”

“I thank you and warn you, in a breath, young man,” Adam replied. “You have gotten the best of me already. Let good enough alone.”

Garde loved him the more for the sacredness in which he held her name and the inclination of her heart. She loved him for the modesty which crept into his speech and deportment when least expected. Loving him thus, so fully, and in this realm, so made for the growth of tender passions, she found it difficult to cease her questions. It was so wholly delightful to hear him repeat, again and again, how he loved her. She was, however, obedient by nature, and now cautious by circumstance.

“Perhaps you will tell me of your travels,” she said,

this subject being next in importance to hearing of his great affection. "I am sure you could relate much of interest, if you are so minded."

"And how shall you know I have traveled?" said the man.

"Why—" Garde found herself confused, having thoughtlessly spoken on a matter of which she did actually know, yet of which she must seem to be in ignorance. "Why—I would know this from your appearance—your dress, to which the young men here are not accustomed. Have you not recently come from over sea?"

"I have," said the rover, satisfied with her answer. "I went away seeking my fortune—which still remains to be sought."

"Oh, well, never mind," said Garde, who for the moment was his partner, to share all his disappointments. "I mean—I mean you don't seem to mind," she added. "I should like to hear you tell about your adventures."

Adam, who felt that he could talk to this boy by the hour, was nothing loath to narrate his wanderings, the more especially as he had always found it difficult sufficiently to praise his friend William Phipps. Therefore, as they walked onward together, Garde thrilling with her love, and turning her eyes fondly upon him, whensoever he was unaware, Adam told and retold of the fights, the hopes, the storms, the success in England, and the illness which had finally given him his leave to go home to his sweetheart.

No lover of Nature ever lingered more fondly over the sighs of trees, the fanning by of fragrant zephyrs,

or the love-*tales* sung by the birds, than did Garde on his every word. And, inasmuch as she could not cling to his arm, when he recited the perils through which he had come, she artfully coaxed him back to declarations of love for his sweetheart, from time to time, to give some satisfaction to her yearning.

CHAPTER XXV.

LOVE'S TRAPS FOR CONFESSIONS.

SOME time before nightfall, the two having shared their luncheons together and wandered on, through the delightful patches of sunlight, slanting through the trees, they came upon one of the farms where Garde had already tested the hospitality of the good people residing by the highway.

Here, by a little dexterity, and through Adam's generosity toward the delicate boy, to whom he had taken such a fancy, Garde occupied the spare apartment she had made her own when headed in the other direction, and Adam contented himself in the hay-loft of the barn.

In the morning they were up betimes, to greet another smiling sun, and so resumed their leisurely journey toward the north. At noon they halted as before, and made a meal of the stock of bread and other provisions they had been able to secure at the farmhouse.

Garde sat upon a mossy bank, while Adam reclined on a stone, somewhat below her woodland throne. Adam looked at her so long and so steadfastly that she grew most uneasy, lest he were about to pierce her disguise.

"What are you looking at?" she said, with an attempt to be boyishly pert.

"I was looking at your legs," said Adam, frankly. "They are uncommonly symmetrical, but a shade too pretty for a boy."

Garde immediately bent the plump objects of interest underneath her and sat on her heels.

"You find a great deal of fault with me," she said, a little vexed.

"It's because you have faults, as a boy," Adam told her, honestly. "You know, my lad, you could be a bit sturdier and none the worse. And yet, I like you immensely as you are. Perhaps if you were changed, you would lose some charm and spoil it all. I shall have to let you be, and content myself with you as you are."

"Oh, thank you," said Garde, already smiling at him again, to herself. "Then please make no more remarks about me."

"About your legs? Well, I won't, since you appear so sensitive about them. Mind you, they will do well enough, after all."

"Shall we go on?" Garde asked him. She was a little weary and would have been glad of further rest, but she found she was much more comfortable when they were walking side by side.

Adam was up at once, for walk they never so fast, he felt he could by no means come up with his thoughts and desires, which had run so far ahead of them always.

"Never mind what I say," said he, as they resumed the onward march. "I have to have my say out, when I think it. And you know you do puzzle me constantly."

"I don't see why, or how," said Garde.

"It's because I seem to think I have seen you somewhere before. And yet I know that is impossible, hence I am driven to think of your girlishness, for an explanation."

Garde said: "I think this is very much in your imagination, Adam Rust."

"Not a bit of it," corrected her comrade. "You were patterned for a girl, my boy, depend upon it. There was some mistake, or some bit of trickery, when you became one of us. Why, a man couldn't even think a little oath, in your presence."

"Then is it not better that I was raised somewhat after the manner of girls?" said Garde, complimented as much by the reverent tone in his voice as by what he had said. "Does not the rearing I have known serve some good purpose, if what you say is so?"

"By my faith, yes. But then you do admit that you were treated in your younger days, somewhat as a girl?"

"I hope it is no shame to confess this is so," she answered, looking down on the ground to hide the dancing of her eyes. "I was treated somewhat in this manner and I was even dressed as a girl, at times."

"Ah, that accounts for your bashfulness and so forth. But you need not blush for this. Bless your heart, a man's the better for it, if he has something of the woman in his heart—and even in his hand."

"I am glad to hear you say so," murmured the girl.

"Oh, yes, it's all right," said Adam magnanimously. He looked at her with frank admiration. "Only it is something of a pity you were not a girl, you know."

"Oh. But why?"

"Because you would be such an one as a man could love."

"But not you, Adam Rust. You have said you love a sweetheart already."

"I do—mightily! But if you were a girl I would enjoy finding a man worthy to love you."

"But this is unseemly. You forget that I am a boy."

"Yes, for some reason or other, it is easy to forget that. But I was merely supposing. Say that a man had come along when you were dressed as a girl—why, what then?"

"What then indeed," said she, with some spirit, "would you have talked like this to me, of—of love?"

"No, I wouldn't," said Rust, stoutly enough. "It would then have been quite another matter. As it is, you play the deuce with my brain and fancy. I start in to talk to you as man to man, and then I think you are almost better fitted to be a girl—and you admit you were raised somewhat in that manner, so what can one expect?"

"Well, what if your sweetheart heard you speaking thus?" said Garde, who was enjoying the situation the more for the very danger of it. "Should you like to have her hear you telling me I should have made a girl that a man could—could love?"

"You being a boy, why not?" Adam made answer. "Ah, she is too present in my thought and feeling for me to say anything I would be loth for her to hear."

They had arrived at the edge of a brook which was somewhat swelled by the snow, back on the hills, melt-

ing in the genial warmth of the sun. It was nothing for Adam to stride across, stepping from rock to rock, but Garde hesitated, her femininity uppermost in a moment, despite her utmost efforts to be boyish.

"Here, give us your hand," said big Adam, turning back to help her over. "Now, then, jump!"

Thrilling with the delight of his warm, strong fingers closing so firmly on her own, Garde came across the brook in safety and then reluctantly released her grip from his.

Adam had not escaped unscathed from this contact of love, with which she was fairly thrilling. He looked at her oddly, when they were safe again on the further side. Garde caught her breath, in fear that she had betrayed herself at last, in that moment of weakness.

"You are too much for me, John," Adam admitted, shaking his head in puzzlement. "You are a strange boy."

"I thought it was all explained," Garde replied, anxious to get him quieted on the subject. "How far should you say it is to Boston?"

"I think I begin to work it out a little," the man went on, musingly. "It's because you remind me of some one I have known."

"Do I?" said Garde, half afraid of her question. "Of whom?"

"I don't quite know," he confessed, looking at her earnestly. "And yet I ought to be able to tell. It was some one I liked, I am sure."

"As much as you did your sweetheart?"

Adam seemed not to hear this question. "Your

complexion," he resumed, "makes me think of a sweet maid I knew at Jamaica."

"Oh!"

"And yet your eyes are like those of a lovely French damsel that I met, one time." Here he sighed. "Your hands bring back a memory of a charming Countess at the court of Charles. Some of your ways make me think of a nice little Indian Princess I once knew; while your ankles—but you don't care to hear about your ankles."

Garde was duly shocked. She knew not what to think of Adam, who was revealing such astonishing epochs in his life. This was terrible. Yet she wished, or almost wished, he had gone on, just a little further, though she dared not encourage him to do so, right as it might be for her to know it if his heart had strayed elsewhere, at any time during his absence. She was alarmed, curious, piqued. She forgot that she was a boy to whom he had spoken.

"It seems to me," she presently answered, "that I remind you of nothing but the ladies and maids of these countries where you have traveled."

"Well, you don't remind me of the lads, that I admit," said Adam.

Garde made up her mind to profit by the occasion. She piled her little courage up to the top-most mark.

"And who was the little maid of Jamaica?" she asked.

"Oh, she was as sweet a little thing as ever prattled Spanish," Rust replied, with a reminiscent look in his eyes. "You would have liked her, I know."

Garde entertained and reserved her own opinion on

that point. "Well—did she like you?" she asked, indifferently.

"Oh yes, she said she did, and I am sure you could depend upon her to tell the truth. She used to like to sit on my knee, dear little thing!"

Garde gasped. It was fortunate that Adam's mind was occupied with memories. His perfidy was coming forth finely. She knew not whether she wished to cry or to stamp her foot in anger. She controlled her impulses heroically.

"About how old was she?" was her next question.

"Three, I should say," said Adam. "She was a pitiful little thing, more than pretty. In a way she made me think of Garde, so I couldn't help but like her."

Garde was flooded, all through her being, with feelings of love and penitence. To think that she had entertained for a moment a notion that Adam—and yet, stay, there were the others,—dames and countesses. They could not all have been mere tots of children. Then she wondered if it were fair, thus to try to trap the poor fellow and take advantage of him, to make him confess these subjects as to another man. Of course for his own good it might be better to let him tell. And she would understand him so much more thoroughly.

"Was the French damsel only three also?" she summoned courage to inquire.

"Oh dear, no. She was three and ninety, but still sprightly in the minuet and with eyes that could easily have lighted the sun again, had he chanced to go out. I shouldn't have been sorry to have her for a mother—

except that I flatter myself I had a better one—once upon a time.”

Garde would have felt like a coward indeed, had she desired to ask him of any of the others. Having done him a little measure of injustice, she made it up to him by loving him the more, now that she found him so innocent. Nevertheless she had ears to listen with when he volunteered some information about the countess he had seen and admired at the court of Charles.

It turned out, however, that he had merely seen her safely married to one of his royal friends, for whose happiness he had the most sincere of wishes.

Garde felt her spirit of daring and merriment return. It was so tempting to play around the point of her identity that she could not altogether resist the impulse of her nature, to keep him talking.

“I seem to be happy in reminding you of many persons,” she said. “But I think I would rather remind you of some one else. Since you claim to be so much in love, it would compliment me more if I could remind you of your Mistress Garde.”

“Maybe you would,” said Adam, “only that I am getting so near to Boston that such a reminiscence, in a boy, would be sheer impertinence.”

CHAPTER XXVI.

A HOLIDAY ENDED.

HAVING the fortune to be overtaken by a good-natured farmer, who was trotting his horses northward, along their road, from a trip to market, the travelers got the benefit of a lift that landed them within a few hours' walk of Boston. However, as the farmer's journey ended where there were no accommodations, and there was still another hour of light, which would suffice to bring them to a small hostelry, where Garde knew she could make such arrangements as she desired, they tramped onward as before.

With every step that brought them further toward their destination Adam waxed more and more impatient to hurry, while Garde found her courage and her footsteps lagging.

She had momentarily forgotten her troubles, in the joy of being with Adam, strolling for hours through the vales of peace and loveliness, but now her tribulations returned, with compound interest. She yearned over her smitten grandfather, yet she feared for what he might do, when he should see her again within his reach, for if he had been well-nigh insane when she saw him last, how much more violent he might now have become.

She trembled likewise at the thought of Randolph,

and the measures of revenge which he might adopt, backed by the power which was sufficient to uphold or to overthrow the charter. From these meditations she was tempted to fly to Adam's arms and implore his protection. It afforded her infinite relief to think that he would at least be near. If the worst came of her returning, she would manage to go to him, by some means, she was certain, and under the stress of circumstances she would not be deemed immodest in beseeching his protection, for which purpose she would consent immediately to become his wife.

Eager to justify herself in what she had done, refusing to believe that honor had been as nothing and Randolph's promises all important, she framed many introductions to the subject, before she could finally begin to question her fellow-traveler upon it.

She then began by reciting to him somewhat of the news of Boston town. She told of the fear for the charter, which had become a mania with the older patriots, of the baleful power of Randolph and of the culminations which at last he was beginning to work against the colony. Adam waxed so wroth against Randolph, whom he remembered distinctly, that she was much encouraged to go on with a hypothetical case which she soon invented.

She dared not connect the name of Randolph directly with her story and questions, lest Adam, when he arrived in Boston, should learn more, concerning the whole wretched business, and know it was she who had undergone the ordeal. Also it required a great concentration of her courage, backed by repeated assurances to herself that Adam thought her a youth, before she

could approach the subject in any manner whatsoever. Yet she knew she would have no such opportunity to speak to him again with anything like the freedom which was now possible, and Goody Dune had made her a sensible young woman.

"Suppose," she finally said, "that a man who had influence with the King threatened to use all his power against the colony and its charter, if some young girl should refuse to become his wife. Would it be her duty to marry the man?"

"That would depend on her spirit of patriotism," said Adam. "If she believed she could save the colony from a grave danger, it seems to me she ought to do so."

"Yes—I think so too," said Garde, honestly. "But suppose she found out that the man had been very false."

"In what manner?"

"Well,—that he had deceived another young woman."

"Do you mean betrayed some other young woman?" said Adam bluntly.

Garde averted her gaze and answered: "Yes."

"Well, suppose this was so, then what is your question?"

"The question is, what do you think the first young woman should do then—after she found out that—that this was true?"

"That would depend again on the particular young woman," said Rust, who believed he was speaking as man to man, and who knew that when women are betrayed it is not always the fault wholly of the male-being in the case. "If she wanted to save the charter,

or anything of that sort, I don't see how this would alter the case particularly."

"You wouldn't excuse the man?" said Garde, turning pale under her brown stain.

Adam had in mind a painful incident which had occurred in the life of a friend of his in England. "I might," he answered. "Possibly a great deal could be said in defense of the poor devil, in some way or another."

"But," insisted Garde, somewhat desperately, "if you were a girl you wouldn't marry such a man?"

"If I were a girl and I loved him," said Rust, still thinking of the case of his friend, "why—I think perhaps I should."

"But if you hated and loathed him?" Garde almost cried.

"Oh, that is quite a different matter. If hate entered in, I should welcome any excuse to get away. In the actual case of which I was thinking, it seems to me the girl ought to forgive—— But I had forgotten all about the element of the charter, which we were supposing was to figure in the case."

Garde cared for nothing further about the discussion. He had justified her, at least partially. She had always felt that Randolph would have betrayed the colony, even had she sacrificed herself and Adam, to marry him, as her grandfather had desired. She was now a little troubled that Adam could think so nearly as her grandfather had done; that he could really condone such a terrible dishonor in a fellow-man. Had it not been that, under cover of her present disguise she had proved how true and good her Adam was, she would

have been pained and perhaps worried by his latitude of thought. She had to finish the subject, so she said :

“ If she—this girl—not only hated the man, but felt sure he would not keep his promise to do good for the charter, but would deceive her and every one else, just as he had deceived the other girl—then what ought she to do ? ”

“ It would be high time, under those circumstances,” replied her companion, “ to refuse absolutely, or to ship on the first departing vessel, or to do anything else that would be quick and to the point.”

“ That is just what I think,” said Garde, now well satisfied.

“ It’s more important for us, my boy, to think of what we shall do when we arrive in Boston, to-morrow,” Adam now remarked. “ By the way, do you know anybody there ? ”

Garde hesitated before answering. She had to be clever. “ Nobody there will know me when I get there,” she said, “ unless it is some one I might once have known.”

Rust did not analyze the ambiguity of this reply. He was engrossed with other reflections.

“ Have you got any money ? ” he asked her next. “ Because if you haven’t you can have the half of mine,—not much to speak of, but enough to feed you and put you to bed. I hope to get into some better tavern than the Crow and Arrow.”

“ Thank you,” said Garde, looking at him slyly with a tender light of love in her eyes, “ I think I have enough for a time.”

"If we stop at the same tavern, and have our meals served together, it will cost you less," Adam informed her practically, "and besides, I have grown so fond of you, my boy, that I should be sorry to lose sight of you, in the town."

"But the sooner you lose sight of me, the sooner you will see your sweetheart," said Garde, with difficulty restraining her lips from curving in a smile.

"Ah, but I shall wish her to know you," said Adam, generously. "For to no one else save you have I ever been able to talk of my love for her sweet self, and this is something of a miracle. As I think upon it, you do remind me of her often, by your voice, though it is not so sweet as hers, as I may have said before, and by other tokens, which I am at a loss to define. But because of these things, I would fight for you, and with her sweet approval."

"I am sure of it," said Garde. "I trust you will have great joy when you find her again. And you may tell her for me, if you will, that—well, that she should love you with her whole soul,—but she does already, I am sure."

"You are a kind as well as a gentle boy," said Adam to her gravely. "I am glad it could be no matter to her for me to like you so exceedingly, you being a boy,—but, boy, you do bedevil my brain with your girlish ways. I shall never explain you, I'll be sworn."

"Here is where we turn, for the night's rest," Garde replied, avoiding the puzzled look which Rust directed to her face. "We have had a pleasant journey of it together. I shall never forget it."

"Let's wait till it's finished before we sum it up,"

said Adam. "To-morrow we have a few more hours, ere we reach the town, and these may be the pleasantest of all."

Yet when the boy said good night to him, after their supper, he felt a strange sense of loss for which he was wholly unable to account.

In the morning the matter was somewhat explained. The boy had arisen before the sun and gone on her way without him.

It was not without a little pang in his heart that the rover trudged onward, alone.

CHAPTER XXVII.

IN BOSTON TOWN.

GARDE fairly ran, when she made her early morning start. She had not been able to think of any other solution of the problem of getting back to her own proper sphere without permitting Adam to become aware of the whole situation. She had not come to her resolution to cope with the difficulty thus without many little sighs of regret and a few little fears of what might be the consequences. Nevertheless, she had seen the necessity of prompt action, after which she had felt a desire only for haste. She was, however, buoyed up by the glad thought that Adam would not be long behind her, in his march to town, hence she would soon be seeing him there, under circumstances which would make it possible to accept his love and to lean upon his strong, protecting arm.

The sun was no more than an hour up in the sky when she came to the outskirts of Boston and ran quickly on to Goody Dune's. Goody was not at all surprised to see her thus returning. Indeed she had looked to see her back at least a week earlier. The old woman, preparing against this moment, had plaited the long locks of hair which Garde had been obliged to leave behind, and these she helped the truant to wind upon her head, with some semblance of natural growth, an effect which

she heightened by providing a small lace cap, which made of Mistress Merrill a very demure-appearing little person.

The brown stain rapidly succumbed to Goody's treatment with vinegar. Garde emerged from the mask as rosy and cream white as an apple, for the open air and the days with Adam had wrought such evidence of health and happiness upon her that not the dread of what she might discover at home, nor any excitement of being in the land of her enemy, could make any paleness in her face of more than a moment's duration. She was too excited to eat, although Goody tried to urge her to take even a cup of tea, and so she went on to her grandfather's house, and let herself in, at the rear.

As Granther Donner's sister had passed away a number of years before, he had been left quite to himself when Garde decamped. But when his illness came so suddenly upon him, Mrs. Soam and Prudence, both persuaded that Garde was almost, if not entirely, in the right, appeared dutifully at his bedside as ministering angels.

Thus Garde, upon entering the kitchen, found her Aunt Gertrude engaged in preparing a breakfast. The good lady was startled.

"Why—Garde!" she gasped. "Oh, dear me, is it really you? Child, where have you been? Oh, David is very ill indeed. I am so glad you have come home!"

"I came because I heard he was ill," said Garde, who was more calm than might have been expected. "I didn't know you were here. It was real good of you to come, dear aunty. I suppose you will scold me."

"It was all a terrible thing," said her aunt, "but

John says he thinks Mr. Randolph meant to take away our charter anyway."

"Oh, I am sure of it!" cried Garde, so glad to hear of a partisan. "If I hadn't believed that, I don't think I should ever have run away. Oh, thank you, so much, dear aunty! I am so glad. God bless Uncle John! I knew I was right!"

"But your uncle and all of us are very sad," her aunt proceeded to add. "They don't think we will have the charter through the summer. It is a terrible time, but they all say that Randolph must have been getting ready, or he couldn't have done so much so quickly. It is a sad day for Massachusetts. But, there, run in and see David, do,—but, dearie, don't be surprised if he doesn't seem to know you."

In the dining-room Garde and Prudence met, a moment later.

"Good morning, Garde," said the cousin, without the slightest sign of emotion.

Garde kissed her, impulsively. "Oh, I am so glad to see you, dear!" she said. Indeed love had so wrought upon her that she felt she had never so cared for any one before as she did for all these dear ones now.

She hastened on to her grandfather, and Prudence was left there, looking where her cousin had gone and solemnly wishing she also might do something emotional and startling.

But a few hours only sufficed to reduce the spirit of wildness and youthful exhilaration which Garde had brought with her back from the road in the forest. To hear the old patriot raving, childishly, and crying and praying over the charter and over Garde as a baby,

which was the way he seemed to remember his grandchild, was a thing that rent her heart and drove all joy from the life of care into which she came, in her mood of penitence and quiet.

The days slipped by and became weeks. Prudence returned to her father at once. Goodwife Soam remained to help Garde over the crisis, and then she too left the girl with the stricken old man, who had become a prattling child, on whom the word "Charter" acted like a shock to make him instantly insane against his daughter's child.

In the meantime Adam Rust, having come to Boston in a moment when excitement, despair and bitter feeling, such as the town nor the colony had ever known before, and which completely altered the Puritan people, had heard a garbled story of Randolph's perfidy and his attempt to marry Garde which made his blood boil. Fortunately the fact that Garde had run away had been kept so close a secret, that more persons had heard how devotedly she was attending David Donner than knew any hint of her escapade. Adam having first paid his respects to Mrs. Phipps, to whom he delivered the Captain's messages and letters, had found himself apartments in a tavern quite removed from the Crow and Arrow, where he had been able easily to avoid all his former acquaintances of Boston. He might have desired to search out Wainsworth, but Henry was away at Salem. Randolph, of whom Adam naturally thought, had betaken himself to New York, there to conclude some details of snatching the charter from the colony of Massachusetts.

Once settled, Adam lost no time in searching for

Garde. Thus he was soon made aware of the state of the Donner household, into the affairs of which it would have been anything but thoughtful and kind to obtrude his presence. With a courteous patience he set himself to wait for a seemly moment in which to apprise Garde of his reappearance. He told himself that, as she had no intimation that he had returned to Boston, it would be a greater kindness to keep himself in the background, until her trials should be lessened.

Naturally all these various matters had somewhat obliterated from his mind the thoughts of the youth with whom he had traveled from the environs of Plymouth. While he was curbing his spirit and his too impatient love, a message arrived, in care of Goodwife Phipps, from Captain William Kidd, to the effect that the beef-eaters, far from recuperating after their voyage, had become seriously ill, and were begging each day for the "Sachem."

Rust had been contemplating the acceptance of an offer from Mrs. Phipps to assume command at the shipyard, the foreman in charge being then arrogating powers unto himself which were not at all quieting. Adam reflected that if he took this place he could settle down, marry his sweetheart presently, and become a sober citizen.

With the advent of the message from the beef-eaters, he was completely at a loss to know what to do. He yearned over these faithful companions, whose affection had been repeatedly demonstrated, under circumstances the most trying. If they should die while he remained away, selfishly denying them so little a thing as his presence, he would never obtain his own

forgiveness. Yet he could not go to New York, or any other where on earth, without first having at least seen Garde. Indeed he reflected now that mayhap it had been a mistaken kindness for him to remain away from her side so long. Should he not have gone to her long before, and offered what service he could render in her trial?

As a matter of fact he had been kind as it was, for Garde had hardly enjoyed a moment in which to do so much as to think of love and her lover. Her grandfather had occupied her attention day and night. She had stinted him in nothing, else with her spirit of penitence upon her—for all that she had helped to hasten upon him—she could never have had any peace of mind nor contentment in her soul.

But at last, when the old man was out of danger, sitting in his chair by the hour, she had time to think of Adam again and to wonder why it was that he had never attempted to see her. She answered herself by saying it was better that he had not done so, but then, when she suddenly thought that he might have heard all manner of wild stories, and might indeed have gone away, angered and not understanding the truth, she yearned for him feverishly.

As if the message of her love flew unerringly to him, Adam suddenly, in the midst of thinking of going to the beef-eaters, determined to see his sweetheart, cost what it might.

CHAPTER XXVIII.

LOVE'S GARDEN.

AFTER nearly a week of rain and dull, gray skies, the weather was again entrancing. The warm, soporific breeze which played through the house lulled Grandther Donner off to sleep, as he sat in his chair, staring at vacancy and rubbing his thumb across the ends of his fingers.

Garde, responding to the mood of coming summer, could not resist the impulse to go out into the garden, which to her would always be associated with her childish meeting with Adam Rust, and which therefore now made of her yearning to see him a positive force.

Thus it doubtless appeared to her as an answer to her longing when she felt a presence and glanced up at the gate, to see him standing there, as he had so many years before, with two of the pickets clasped in his big, strong hands.

Her heart gave a leap that almost hurt, so suddenly did it send the ecstasy bounding through her veins. Yet so sublimated was the look on Adam's face, as, with parted lips and visible color rising and falling in his face, he gazed at her, steadfastly, and as one entranced, that she went toward him as slowly as if walking might disturb the spell.

One of her hands, like a homing dove, came up to

press on her bosom above her heart. She was pale, for the cares of those weeks had bleached the rose-tints from her cheeks. Nevertheless, the moment painted them with vestal flames of love's own lamp, as she looked into Adam's eyes and saw the tender passion abiding there.

"Adam, I prithee come in," she said, in a soft murmur, unconsciously repeating what she had said when first he had leaned upon this gate.

As one approaching something sacred, Adam came in and took her two hands in his. He raised them slowly to his lips, and then pressed them together against his breast.

"Garde," he said, almost whispering. "Garde. My little Garde."

"Oh, Adam," she answered.

They looked at one another and smiled, she through shining tears. Then they laughed, for there were no words, there was nothing which could absolutely express their overflowing joy, but their laughing, which was wholly spontaneous, came the nearest.

"Oh, I have been so afraid this moment would never come," said Garde, presently, when she could trust herself to speak. "It has been such a long, long time to wait."

"I love you. Garde, dearest, I love you," said Adam. "I love to say that I love you. I could say it all day: 'Garde, I love you. Garde, I love you, dear, and love you.' I have told every star in the heavens to tell you how I love you, dear. But I would rather tell you myself. Let me see you. Let me look at you, sweetheart." He still held her hands, but at

arms' length away, and looked at her blushing face with such an adoration in his eyes as she had never beheld.

Indeed, Adam's passion had swept her from her feet. It possessed her, enveloped her form, held her enthralled in an ecstasy so profound that she gasped to catch her breath, while her heart leaped as if it were peeling out her happiness.

They were standing thus, oblivious of everything, when a sour-visaged Puritan, passing by the gate, halted a moment to look at them malignantly. It was none other than Isaiah Pinchbecker, the scolding hypocrite who had danced to Adam's fiddling, several years before. He suddenly gave himself a nudge in the ribs. His eyes lighted up with grim satisfaction. He had recognized the rover, and with news in his narrow head he hastened away, prodding himself assiduously as he went.

In the meantime, Grandther Donner, whose naps lasted hardly as long as forty winks, had awakened. He started from his sleep as if he had suddenly caught himself neglecting to watch the charter. Glancing hastily about the room, he missed Garde at once. In his brain, two cells had broken their walls so that their substance commingled, till Garde and the charter seemed at times the same, and always so interlinked that he dared not let her go a yard from his sight.

He tottered to his feet, and rubbing his thumb diligently across the ends of his fingers, went out at the open door, toward his grandchild, guided by some sense which in an animal is often highly developed. He came upon the scene in the garden just as Adam, after looking his heart full, nearly to bursting, had

drawn Garde close again, to kiss her hands in uncontrollable joy.

At sight of Adam's costume, which was not a great departure from that of the Royalists of the day, in contradistinction from that of the Puritans, David Donner flew into a violent rage. He raised his two palsied hands above his head and screamed.

"Garde!" he cried, "Garde! Kill that man—Kill him!—kill him! The charter! The King's devil! Kill him! He's ripping the charter to pieces with his teeth!"

He came running toward them, clawing his nails down across his face till he made his pale cheeks bleed, and tore out little waving filaments, like gossamer, from his snow-white hair. Almost at their feet he fell full length, where he struck at the soil and dug in his finger nails, frantically, all the while making terrible sounds in his paroxysm, most dreadful to hear.

Adam and Garde had started, he merely alert in the presence of the unexpected, she in a fear that sent the color from her face so abruptly that it seemed she must swoon at once. She uttered one little cry, clung galvanically to Adam's fingers for a second, and then bent quickly down to place her hand on the old man's head.

His delirious fury lasted but a moment. It then subsided as quickly as it had come, leaving him limp, exhausted, dull-eyed and panting like some run-down animal. A more pitiable sight than he then became, as he began to weep, shaken by the convulsive sobs which sometimes possess the frame of a man, Adam hoped he should never be obliged to witness.

Well as he understood that the sight of himself had precipitated this painful episode, Adam was also now aware that the old man, for the moment, saw and comprehended nothing. He therefore lifted him tenderly up in his arms and carried him into the house, placing him gently down on a lounge which he readily saw had been recently employed for the old man's couch.

Garde had followed, her hands clasped together, the look of a tired mother in her face, making it infinitely sweet and patient.

"Garde, dear, forgive me," said Adam. "I came too soon to see you."

"Oh Adam!" she said, sadly. "In a few days, a week, dear, he is sure to be better."

"Is there anything I can do?" said Adam, from the depths of his distress and sympathy and love.

"Oh, he is coming back to himself. Go, Adam, please," said Garde, "don't wait, dear, please. Come back to the gate, this evening."

Adam went without so much as waiting to say good-by, for Garde had turned to her grandfather quickly, and anything further he might have said he abandoned, when David feebly spoke.

Depressed by the whole affair immeasurably, Adam was still too exalted by love's great flight to dwell for long upon old Donner's mania. His worries for Garde, in her tribulations, however, were strewn like sad flowers of thought through his reverie. He longed to help her, yet he knew how utterly impossible such a thing would be.

Walking aimlessly, he came before long to the harbor shore. The melted emerald and sapphire, which the

sea was rolling against the rocks, with sparkles of captured sunlight glinting endlessly through and upon the lazy billows, gave him the greatest possible sense of delight. He sat down on a rock where the green velvet moss had dried like fur, after a wetting.

No king on a throne ever detected more evidences of the world's gladness than did the rover, thinking away the hours of that balmy afternoon. He forgot all about dinner, when the sun went down, and he had nearly forgotten old man Donner, when at length he started to his feet, in the twilight, in love with the evening for having come so soon, although half an hour before he had been thinking the day would never end.

He was soon at the gate in front of Donner's house, listening, watching the darkened windows, holding his breath as every fragrant zephyr trailed its perfumes by, thinking Garde was coming, preceded by the redolence attendant on her loveliness.

But he had many such breathless moments of suspense, in vain. Evening glided into the arms of night. The hours winged by, on raven wings, and still no Garde appeared. Adam paced up and down, restoring, time after time, the picture of Garde as he had seen her, during those precious few moments before the interruption.

He was not conscious of the flight of time. He was well content to be near where his lady was and to wait there, knowing that she knew he was waiting, thinking of her, as he knew she was thinking of him. He clasped his hands back of his head ; then he folded his arms, the better to press on his heart ; then he stopped

and tossed kisses to the silent house, after which he again walked back and forth, pausing to listen, and then going on as before.

At length, near midnight, he stood looking up at the stars, completely absorbed in a dream he was fashioning to suit himself.

There was a faint flutter.

"Adam—oh, are you there?" said a sweet voice, subdued and a bit tremulous. "Oh, I am so glad you didn't go away, discouraged."

Adam had turned about instantly, a glad sound upon his lips. In one stride he reached the gate and caught her two trembling hands where they rested on the pickets.

"Dearest!" he murmured to her joyously. "At last!"

"I can only stop a minute, Adam," said Garde, who was quaking a little, lest her grandfather wake and come again into the garden. "He has been very restless, and he wouldn't go to sleep, and he wakes up so easily! But I couldn't let you go away like that. And I have tried to come out five times, but he woke up every time, and now I must say good night, Adam, and run right back at once."

"Oh, but I love you so," said Adam, illogically. "If you must go, though, you must. I know I can never tell you how much I love you, dearest."

"Oh, Adam!" she said, expressing more than he did, poor fellow, in all his protestations. "Oh, dear! I really must go, Adam. But in about a week I am sure he will be much better."

"Shan't I see you for a week?" said he.

"It might be better not," she answered, "if we could wait."

"I could go down to see my poor old beef-eaters, I suppose," Adam mused.

In relating his travels, on the road, he had told Garde of the beef-eaters, so that now, although she said nothing to betray herself, she understood what he meant.

"And then you'll come back, as soon as you can, in a few days, or a week?" she asked. "Oh, dear—it is too bad. But, Adam, I must not remain another single minute. I must say good night, dear, and run."

Adam had remained on his own side of the gate, retaining her hands, which he had kissed repeatedly, till they fairly burned with their tingling. He now reached over the gate and took her sweet face between his two big palms.

"Good night, dearest little love," he said, and slowly leaning forward, he kissed her, once—then he kissed her three times more.

She started slowly away, looking back at him lovingly.

"Oh, Garde!" he whispered.

She stopped and came fluttering back to meet him. He had let himself in at the gate with one quick movement. He took her home to his arms and held her in breathless joy against his throbbing heart. With love in her eyes her face was turned upward to his own.

"My Adam!" she said, with all the fervor of her nature.

"My love! My darling!" he responded.

He kissed her again. It was a warm, sweet kiss that

brought their very souls to their lips. Then he dropped down on his knee and kissed her hands and pressed their fragrant palms against his face.

"My love!" he said. "My own love!"

She nestled in his arms yet once again. She gave him the one more kiss that burned on her lips to be taken, and then she fled swiftly to the house.

CHAPTER XXIX.

THE ENEMY IN POWER.

ADAM found his faithful beef-eaters on the verge of the grave. The miserable old rogues had no better sense than to be pining to death like two masterless dogs. They had been ill enough, in all conscience, and even somewhat mentally disordered, but there had been no sufficient grounds for the pair to believe themselves abandoned by their "Sachem," and there had been absolutely no excuse for them to refuse to eat.

However, the rascals nearly "wagged" themselves to pieces when Rust was finally beside them, and the way they laughed was most suggestively like the glad whimpering of two dumbly loving animals expressing their joy. Adam would have scolded the two for having brought themselves to such a condition of weakness and bones, only that he had not the heart to do this justice to the case.

There was, however, no such thing as getting the old fellows back on their pins in a week, nor yet in two, nor three. They even hesitated, after he had come, between running backward toward their long sleep and coming along with him to vales of renewed health. They were like affectionate creatures divided between two masters. The grim visitor had come so near to win-

ning them both, with his beckoning, that they appeared to think it their duty to die.

Adam, however, was a persuasive force. He had won them away from themselves before ; he won them again on this occasion. Captain Kidd, a braw Scotsman, who ordinarily dropped his native dialect, having little affection for his country, his father having suffered tortures for becoming a non-conformist clergyman, felt he must needs relapse into something barbaric to express himself on the beef-eaters.

“Of all the twas that ere twad,” said he, “you’re muckle the strangest twa.”

By this he meant to convey that of all the couples that ever mated, the two old rascals were the oddest pair.

The convalescence being a slow affair, Adam was obliged to give up all thought of returning immediately to Boston. Yet so hopeful was he that every day would perform some miracle of restoring the strength to the muscles and the meat to the bones of his retinue, that it was not until he had been away from Garde for more than three weeks that he finally wrote to tell her of why he had failed to return. But the letter, for some unknown reason, was never delivered.

At length, however, what with the fulness of summer come upon them and the hope which Adam had inspired in their breasts, the beef-eaters became padded out to the fulness of their old-time grandeur, and once more swaggered about and bragged of their prowess.

Adam’s money had, by this time, dwindled down to a sum which was not at all difficult to transport from place to place, nor even from pocket to pocket. Hav-

ing no heart to put the retinue on shipboard, to convey them to Massachusetts, he sacrificed nearly his last bit of coin to secure them passage, by coach and wagon, from Manhattan to Boston. This left him either one of two expedients for himself. He could walk, or he could make shift to secure a passage by vessel, giving work as payment for the favor. He argued that once in Boston he would accept the position offered by Goodwife Phipps at the ship-yard, and hither also would he take his followers, so that by honest toil they might all be happy and continue their time-sealed companionship, and desert the rolling-stone business as an occupation.

It was not without misgivings that the beef-eaters accepted this arrangement. But being obedient things that would willingly have gone into fire, or the sea itself, at Adam's command or wish, they meekly bade him a temporary adieu and saw him depart before them, a ship being several days ahead of the coach in point of time for departing.

In the meantime, history had been making fast in Boston. The crafty Randolph, whose coup had long been prepared, had returned from New Amsterdam, bearing a commission from the King of England declaring the charter null and void and delegating upon him power to form a new provisional government for the colony of Massachusetts. Great tracts of territory, comprising New Hampshire, Maine and other areas, were lopped off from the province at one fell blow. Randolph created Joseph Dudley provisional governor, Dudley having long been seeking his favor, against this final moment of changes. The courts fell into the

hands of the newly-elected power. The soldiers, constabulary, everything assumed an ultra-English tone and arrogance. The people clenched their fists and wrought their passions up to a point where rebellions are lighted in a night.

Yet Boston was a loyal town, obedient to its liege lord and nearly as eager to serve him and to do him homage as it was to preserve its liberties and the independence, which gradual development had created and long usage had confirmed as inalienable, in the belief of all the patriotic citizens. Stoughton and Bradstreet, beholding the revolutionary tendency, which would have plunged the colony most unwisely into a sea of trouble, submitted to the new order of things, which for long they had seen coming, inevitably, out of the malignant spirit in which the Stuart dynasty had always desired to govern these non-conformist hard-heads.

There were many creatures in Boston swift to join the Tory party, under Randolph, for the plums of official recognition. Thus this party rapidly assumed considerable dimensions, and therefore power, to add to that of which the King himself was the fountain-head.

Boston at that time was a prosperous town of something more than six thousand souls. It was substantially built, if crookedly, for the most part of wood. Yet there was a fair sprinkling of brick houses along its cow-path streets, and a few were of stone, which, in several instances, had been brought to this undeveloped land from England. The town was distinctly English, both as to customs and thoughts, but the seeds which hardihood had sown, were to grow the pillars of Ameri-

canism—synonymous with a spirit of Democracy sufficient to inspire the world !

Naturally Isaiah Pinchbecker became a master-jackal under the new régime. Psalms Higgle, the lesser light of lick-spittling, became, by the same token, a lesser carnivora, but no less hungry to be feeding on the foe-masters of the recent past. And Pinchbecker, having found Adam in the town, was alert to find him again.

Yet not even Pinchbecker, with his knife-edge mind, devoted to evolving schemes of vengeance, could have comprehended the tigerish joy with which Randolph remembered Adam Rust, from that morning in the Crow and Arrow, and with which he now put two and two together, to arrive at Adam's relationship with Garde Merrill.

Randolph was a subtle schemer, never fathomed by the Puritans, against whom he displayed such an implacable hatred. He was far too wise ever to appear as the point, when a thrust of revenge was to be delivered. He never for a moment relaxed his obsequious demeanor, nor his air of injured guiltlessness. Like all men of power, he had much material, self-offered, from which to choose his henchmen. He had chosen Pinchbecker wisely, for a hypocrite, a fawner, and an arrant knave who could work endless harm, in an underhanded fashion. But for his more aggressive employment he attached to his service a great, burly brute, with a face like a mastiff's, an intelligence like a sloth's, and a courage like that of a badger. This masterpiece of human animalism responded to the name of "Gallows," for once a man had been hanged on his back, as in early

English-Irish usage, and of this he was matchlessly proud.

Adam arrived in the midst of that first elation of Randolph and his following, the like of which is frequently the cause of reaction so violent as to quite reverse the fates themselves. But although the Puritans hated Dudley, almost more than Randolph, for traitorously joining the party of destruction, their growlings checked nothing of the all-importance which the creatures in power felt and made their fellow-beings feel. A spirit of sullen brooding settled on the people.

Unaware that Rust had been away from Boston, since he had seen him that day in Donner's garden with Mistress Merrill, Pinchbecker had been seeking for him diligently, ever since Randolph's return. But believing that his quarry would be found eventually in the vicinity of the Crow and Arrow, his field of investigations was narrow.

It had naturally happened, however, that Adam had quite forgotten to tell the beef-eaters of his change of abode in Boston. They would therefore proceed to the old tavern immediately upon their arrival. He thought of this before he landed. Having come ashore at twilight, he made it his duty to stroll to the Crow and Arrow, for the purpose of leaving a message for Pike and Halberd, when at last they should come to the town.

CHAPTER XXX.

A FIGHT AT THE TAVERN.

It was a quiet time of the day, in a quiet part of the city. Adam discerned one or two individuals only and was not concerned with noting that he was suddenly preceded by a noiseless person, who hastened ahead of him to the tavern. The rover was much more occupied in observing the beauties of a horse that stood hitched to a post across the way from the public house.

The animal, a fine bay, imported from England, was the property of one of Randolph's followers, a drinking young dandy with questionable ambitions and many extravagant tastes. Charmed by the horse's impatience, as evinced by his pawing at the ground, Adam was tempted to get astride his back for a gallop.

However, after standing for a moment on the sidewalk, while his gaze caressed the champing animal, he turned and passed on into the tavern. Desiring to conclude his business as speedily as possible, he was somewhat annoyed to find the way to the bar, in front of the landlord, completely blocked by a great hulk of a creature, with a sword loosely girt about his loins, and two or three others, of whom the rover took less notice.

"By your leave," he said, politely, not yet suspicious of the odd silence which had fallen on the company at his entrance, "I would like to get to the——"

"What!" roared the big lout, whom he had slightly touched upon the arm. "Who the devil are you? Keep your hands off of me, you fool!"

The person on whom Adam looked was Gallows, whose face, florid almost to being purple, was so savagely contorted as to comprise an insult in itself.

"My cross-eyed friend," retorted Adam, whose temper had risen without delay, "have done looking at yourself, if you would see no fool. If you will tell me which hand I put on you, I'll cut it off, else I may live to see it rot!"

The company had turned about at once. Pinchbecker was there, with his satellite, Psalms Higglar, the little white-eyed scamp that Adam had once dropped from the near-by window. The foppish young Englishman, who owned the horse outside, was likewise in the party. They all saw the burly Gallows turn to them hopelessly, befuddled by Adam's answer.

"You be a fool!" he roared again, his eyes bulging out of their sockets in his wrath, "and I be the fool-killer!"

The company guffawed at this, the monster's solitary sally of wit.

"You are a liar by the fact that you live," said Rust. "Bah, you disgust me with the thought of having the duties, which you have so patently and outrageously neglected, thrust upon me. Begone. There's no fire to roast a barbecue, if I should be minded to spit you!"

The creature looked again at his fellows, who had obviously egged him on.

"He insults you right prettily, good Gallows," said

the dandy, who was himself a rascal banished from his own country. "But he dare not fight you, we can see it plainly."

"With you thrown in, I dare say there might be a moment's sport in a most unsavory blood-letting," said Rust, whose hand went to his sword-hilt calmly. "I should want some fresh air if I stuck either one of you carrion-fed buzzards."

Gallows knew by this that it was time to draw his blade. "You be a fool and I be the fool-killer," he roared as before, this being his best hold on language to suit the occasion. Only now he came for Adam like a butcher.

"Outside—go outside, gentlemen!" cried the landlord excitedly.

"Go outside!" said the voice of some one who was not visible. It was Randolph, concealed in the adjoining room and watching the proceedings through a narrow crack, where he had opened the door.

"Go on out, and I'll fight you!" bellowed Gallows.

"After you," said Rust, whose blade was out and being swiftly passed under his exacting eye. "Go out first. You will need one more breath than I."

The brute obeyed, as if he had to do so and knew it, receiving Adam's order like the clod he was.

The other creatures made such a scrambling to see the show, and otherwise evinced such an abnormal interest in the coming fight, that Adam had no trouble in divining that the whole affair had been prearranged, and that if he did not get killed, he would be arrested, should he slay his opponent. He concluded he was something of a match for the whole outfit.

“Have at you, mountain of foul meat,” he said, as he tossed down his hat. “What a mess you will make, done in slices!”

The young dandy laughed, despite himself, from his place by the door.

Gallows needed no further exasperations. He came marching up to Rust and made a hack at him, mighty enough and vicious enough to break down the stoutest guard and cleave through a man’s whole body as well.

Rust had expected no less than such a stroke. He spared his steel the task of parrying the Gallows’ slash. Nimble leaping aside, he made a motion that had something debonair in its execution, and cut a ghastly big flap, like a steak, from the monster’s cheek.

The fellow let out an awful bellow and ran at his opponent, striking at him like a mad Hercules.

“Spare yourself, fool-killer,” said Adam. He dared to bow, as he dodged a mighty onslaught, in which Gallows used his sword like a hatchet, and then he flicked the giant’s ear away, bodily, taking something also of his jowl, for good measure.

The great hulk stamped about there like an ox, the blood hastening down from his face and being flung in spatters about him. Adam next cut him deeply in the muscle of his great left arm.

“I warm to my work,” he said, as he darted actively away and back. “Gentlemen, is your choice for a wing or a leg of the ill-smelling bird?”

The dandy, fresh from England, guffawed and cried “Bravo!” He had been born a gentleman, in spite of himself.

The fight was a travesty on equality. The monster was absolutely helpless. He was simply a vast machine for butchery, but he must needs first catch his victim before he could perform his offices. He was a terrible sight, with his great sword raised on high, or ripping downward through the air, as he ran, half blinded by his own gore, to catch the rover, who played with him, slicing him handily, determined not to kill the beast and so to incur a penalty for murder.

The creatures inside the tavern, appalled by the exhibition they had brought about, saw that their monster was soon to be a staggering tower of blood and wounds.

“Don’t let him get away! Kill him! Kill him!” said the voice of Randolph, from behind the others.

Adam heard him. He saw Pinchbecker shrink back at once. Psalms Higgler, however, glad of an excuse and ready to take advantage of a man already sufficiently beset, came scrambling out. The foppish gentleman was too much of a sportsman to take a hand against such a single swordsman as he found in Rust.

Aware that he was to have no chance, and convinced abruptly that these wretches had plotted to kill him, Adam deftly avoided Gallows, as the dreadful brute came again upon him, and slashing the fellow’s leg behind the knee, ham-strung him instantly.

Roaring like a wounded bull, the creature dropped down on his side, and then got upon his hands and knees and commenced to crawl, wiping out his eyes with his reddened hands.

Unable to restrain his rage, and fearing his intended victim would yet avoid him, Higgler being already at bay and disarmed, Randolph came abruptly out from

the tavern himself, pistol in hand, to perform the task which otherwise was doomed to failure.

"Call the guard!" he cried. "Call the guard!"

Adam had been waiting for some such treachery. He cut at the pistol the second it rose, knocking it end-ways and slicing Randolph's arm, superficially, from near the wrist to the elbow. He waited then for nothing more.

Across the road, before any one guessed his intention, he was up on the back of the horse, before the yelled protest of the English gentleman came to his ears.

"Gentlemen all," he called to the group, "good evening."

Clapping his heels to the ribs of the restive animal, he rode madly away, just as Isaiah Pinchbecker, with half a dozen constables came running frantically upon the scene.

CHAPTER XXXI.

A REFUGEE.

IRRESPONSIBLY joyous, thus to be in a saddle, on a spirited horse, Rust was soon dashing across the common and turning about like a centaur, for ease and grace, glanced back to see who might be joining in the race. His naked sword was still in his hand. It was red from point to hilt. He wiped it on the horse, thereby causing the animal to plunge and to run in a frenzy of nervousness.

Adam chortled. The affair from beginning to end, from his present standpoint, appealed to his sense of humor. The consequences of his adventure would be presented to his mind soon enough. He merely knew now that he had won out of a tight corner, as a gentleman should, that a glorious animal was bounding beneath him and, that sweet night air came rushing upon him as if it opened its arms to receive him.

Aware that he would soon be pursued, and mentally acknowledging that the horse was not his own, he rode to a farm-house about a mile or so out from the town, and there dismounted. Reluctantly he said farewell to the charger, bidding the farmer have the animal returned to Boston in the morning, with his thanks and compliments. For the service he presented the wondering man with a piece of silver, the last he had of the

small amount left him after paying the fares of the beef-eaters up to Massachusetts.

Coolly inviting himself to have a bite of the farmer's scanty supper, he bade the man good night, about five minutes before the mounted constables came riding hotly to the place. He even heard them, when they left the farm and began to scour the woods to jump him up. At this he smiled with rare good humor, confident of the powers of superior wood-craft to baffle anybody or anything in all Massachusetts, save alone an Indian.

Understanding all the delighted chucklings of the forest as he did, he felt at once secure among the trees, as one of the family. Moreover he loved to be wandering in the woods at night. He continued to walk, on and on, beginning to wonder at last what he really intended to do. Then, at the thought of Garde, who might be expecting to see him, and whom he very much desired again to see, he waxed somewhat impatient with this enforced flight from the town where she was.

The more he thought upon it, then, the more impossible it seemed for him to return. Against Randolph, enthroned in power, and against all his wretched disciples, he could not expect to breathe a word which would avail to get him justice. It would be sheer madness to make the attempt. The creatures would charge him with all the crimes on the calendar, and, swearing all to one statement, would convict him of anything they chose. The whole affair had been planned to beat him, or worse, and to a galling extent it had quite succeeded. He was balked, completely and absolutely, in whatsoever direction his meditations

turned. To try to see Garde would be fairly suicidal. Not to see her, especially after his promises, would be, to a man so much in love as he, a living death.

And again, the beef-eaters. What was to become of his faithful retinue? They would arrive there, only to find that he had again deserted them, leaving them wholly at the mercy of Randolph and his jackals. These demons would not be slow at recognizing who and what Pike and Halberd were, from episodes of the past. The two would go straight into the lion's mouth, at the Crow and Arrow.

He thought at first of going to Plymouth. He could write to Garde from there, he reflected, and also to Halberd and Pike. But he soon concluded that this would be to walk merely into the other end of the enemy's trap, for no good or comforting purpose. New York presented itself as a jurisdiction where Randolph's arm would have no power to do him harm. But New York was a long way off. If he went there, not only would he miss seeing Garde, but he could not warn his retinue in time to keep them out of Randolph's clutches.

The business was maddening. He began to think, as a consequence of dwelling on the hopelessness of his own situation, that Randolph would be aiming next at Garde herself, in wreaking his dastardly vengeance for his past defeats. This was intolerable. He halted, there in the dark woods, swaying between the good sense of hiding and the nonsense of going straight back to the town, to carry Garde away from the harpies, bodily.

A picture of old David Donner, stricken, helpless, a

child, arose in his mind, to confront him and to mock his Quixotic scheme. He could not carry both Garde and her grandfather away to New York, nor even to the woods. He was penniless. This was not the only obstacle, even supposing Donner would consent so to flee, which was not at all likely.

It was also certain that Garde would not permit him to carry her off and leave the old man behind. But at least, he finally thought, he could go back to the town and be near, to protect her, if occasion should require a sword and a ready wit. Could he but manage to do this—to go there secretly and remain there unknown—he could gather his beef-eaters about him and together they could and would combat an army !

But how to go back and be undetected, that was the question. In the first place he despised the idea of doing anything that did not smack of absolute boldness and fearlessness. Yet Boston was a seething whirlpool of Randolph's power, at this time. Simply to be caught like a rat and killed like a pest would add nothing of glory to his name, nor could it materially add to Garde's happiness and safety.

Driven into a corner of his brain, as it were, by all these moves and counter-moves on the chess-board of the situation, he presently conceived a plan which made him hug himself in sheer delight.

He would simply disguise himself as an Indian and go to town to make a treaty with Randolph, the Big-man-afraid-to-be-chief.

This so tickled his fancy that, had an Indian settlement been near at hand, he would have been inside his buckskins and war-paint and back to Boston ahead of

the constables themselves. In such a guise, he told himself, he could manage to see his sweetheart, he could get his beef-eaters clear of danger, baffle his foes, and arrange to carry both Garde and her grandfather away to safety.

But the first consideration was, where should he find an Indian? He was aware that the Red men had been pushed backward and westward miles from the towns of the whites. It was years since he had roamed through the forests and mountains—years since he had known where his old-time, red brothers built their lodges. There could be but one means of finding a camp, namely: to walk onward, to penetrate fairly to the edge of the wilderness beyond.

Nothing daunted by the thought of distance, he struck out for the west. Like the Indians themselves, he could smell the points of the sunrise and sunset, unerringly. With boyish joy in his thoughts, and in the dreams he fashioned of the hair-breadth events that would happen when he arrived in the town in his toggery, he plodded along all night, happy once more and contented.

CHAPTER XXXII.

A FOSTER PARENT.

ADAM covered many a mile before the morning. Mindless of his hunger, spurred by the thought that he must soon be back in Boston, he felt that the further he went the more he must hasten. Thus he marched straight on till noon.

He rested briefly at this time, filled his craving stomach with water, and again made a start. In fifteen minutes he came upon a clearing, at the edge of a little valley where up-jutting rocks were as plentiful as houses in a city. Pausing for a moment, to ascertain the nature of the place, and to prepare himself against possible surprise, he presently approached a small log hut, of more than usually rude construction.

There appeared to be no signs whatsoever of life about the place. No smoke ascended from the chimney; there was no animal in sight, not even so much as a dog.

Adam glanced hurriedly about the acre or so of land, beholding evidences of recent work. A tree had been felled, not far away, within the week. In a neat little patch of tilled soil, green corn stood two feet high and growing promisingly.

Going to the cabin-door he knocked first and gave it a push afterward, for it was not latched, although it

was nearly closed. There being no response from the inside, he entered. The light entered with him. It revealed a strange and dreadful scene.

On the floor lay a man, dressed, half raised on his elbow, looking up at the visitor with staring eyes, while he moved his lips without making a sound. A few feet away sat a little brown baby-boy, clothed only in a tiny shirt. He looked up at big Adam wistfully. Strewn about were a few utensils for cooking, a bag which had once contained flour, the dust of which was in patches everywhere, and an empty water-bucket and dipper, with all the bedding and blankets from a rude wooden bunk, built against the wall.

In amazement Adam stood looking at the man. In the haggard face, with its unkempt beard and glassy eyes he fancied he saw something familiar. Memory knocked to enter his brain. Then, with a suddenness that gave him a shock, he recognized a man he had known in England—an elder brother of Henry Wainsworth, supposed to have died years before—drowned while attempting to escape from an unjust sentence of imprisonment for treason.

“Wainsworth!” he said, “good faith! what is the meaning of this?”

The man sank back on the floor, a ghost of a smile passing across his face. He moved his lips again, but Adam heard not a word.

Bending quickly down, he became aware that the man was begging for water. He caught up the bucket and hastened forth, presently finding the spring, to which a little path had been worn in the grass.

Back at once, he placed the dipper to the dried-out

lips and saw this fellow-being drink with an evidence of joy such as can only come to the dying. Wainsworth shivered a little, as the dipper left his teeth, and jerked his hand toward the silent child, sitting so near, on the floor. Adam comprehended. He gave more of the water to the small, brown baby. It patted the dipper with its tiny hands and looked up at him dumbly.

"What in the world has happened here?" said Rust.

Making a mighty effort, the man on the floor partially raised his head and arms. He looked at Adam with a hungering light in his eyes. "I'm—done—for," he said, thickly and feebly.

Adam hustled together the blankets on the floor and made a pillow, which he placed for Wainsworth to lie on. "Shall I put you into the bed?" he asked.

The man shook his head. "I'm crushed," he said, winking from his eyes the already gathering film that tells of the coming end. "Tree—fell—killed the—wife. I—crawled—here."

Adam looked at him helplessly. He knew the man was dying. He felt what agonies the man must have suffered. "Man!" he said, "can't I get you something to eat?"

Wainsworth waved his hand toward the wreckage strewn on the floor. "Nothing—here," he said. Then he made a great effort, the obvious rally of his strength. "Save the—boy," he implored. "Give him a—chance. . . . Don't—tell—about me. I married—his mother—Narragansett—God bless—her. . . . Give—him—a—chance. . . . Thanks."

As he mentioned the child's mother, his eyes gave up

two tears—crystals, which might have represented his soul, for it had quietly escaped from his broken body.

Adam, kneeling above him, looked for a moment at his still face, on which the shadow of a smile rested. Then he looked at the little, brown youngster, half Narragansett Indian, gazing up in his countenance with a timid, questioning look, winking his big black eyes slowly, and quite as deliberately moving his tiny toes.

It was not a situation to be thought out nor coped with easily. To have found any human being in this terrible plight would have been enough, but to have found Henry Wainsworth's brother thus, and to have him tell such a brief, shocking story, and make of his visitor all the things which Adam would have to become at once, was enough to make him stand there wondering and wondering upon it all.

"You poor little rascal," he said to the child, at last.

He selected a shovel and a pick, from some tools which he noted, in a corner, and laying aside his sword, he went to work, on the preface to his duties, out by the patch of corn where he found the pretty, young Indian mother, clasped and held down to earth in an all too ardent embrace, by an arm of the fallen tree.

When he had padded up the mound over the two closed human volumes, he was faint with hunger. He carried the tools again to the house, and stood as before, looking at the baby-boy, who still sat where he had left him, on the floor.

"Well, I suppose you are hungry, you little brown man," he said. "I must see what there is to be had."

There was little opportunity for extended explorations. The one room had contained the all of Wainsworth and

his Narragansett partner. Rust soon found himself wondering what the two had lived upon. What flour and meal there had been, the man, despite his two crushed legs, had pulled down, from a box-like cupboard, on the wall, together with a bit of dried meat. Of the latter only a dry fragment remained, still tied to a string, while of the meal and flour, only the empty bags gave evidence that they once had existed.

There was no way possible for Adam to know that in the forest, not far away, the lone woodsman had set his traps, for squirrels and rabbits, nor that fifteen minutes' walk from the door a trout stream had furnished its quota to the daily fare. He only knew that there was nothing edible to be found here now. There was salt, a bit of grease, on a clean white chip of pine, and a half gourd, filled with broken-up leaves, which had doubtless been steeped for some manner of tea or drink.

"Partner," he said, to the child, "someone has been enforcing sumptuary laws upon us. I hesitate in deciding whether we shall take our water salted or fresh."

With his hand on the hilt of his sword he regarded the youngster earnestly. Nothing prettier than the little naked fellow could have been imagined, howbeit he was not so plump as a child of his age should be, for the lack of nourishment had already told upon him markedly. Adam felt convinced, from various indications, that the tree which had done its deadly work had fallen about a week before, and that Wainsworth had not been able to do anything more than to crawl to the cabin, to die, neither for himself or the child.

For a time the rover wondered what he must do.

His own plans had nearly disappeared from his mind. He reflected that a child so brown as this, so obviously half a little Narragansett, would be ill received by the whites. The Indians would be far more likely to cherish the small man, according to his worth. He therefore believed the best thing he could do would be to push onward, in the hope of finding an Indian settlement soon. There were several reasons, still remaining unaltered, why it would be wiser not to take the child to Boston.

“Well, our faces are dirty, partner,” he said, at the end of a long cogitation, in which the baby had never ceased to look up in his countenance and wink his big eyes, wistfully. “Let’s go out and have a bath.”

He took the tiny chap up in his arms and carried him forth to the spring. Here, in the warm sunlight, he got down on his knees in the grass, bathed his protégé, over and over again, for the pleasure it seemed to give the child and the joy it was to himself, to feel the little wet, naked fellow in his hands.

The sun performed the offices of a towel. Without putting his tiny shirt back upon him, Adam rolled the small bronze bit of humanity about on his back, patting his velvety arms and thighs and laughing like the grown-up boy he was, till the little chap gurgled and crowed in tremendous delight. But it having been only the freshness of the water, air and sunlight which had somewhat invigorated the baby, he presently appeared to grow a little dull and weary. Adam became aware that it was time to be moving. He washed out the child’s wee shirt and hung it through his belt to dry as they went. Then taking a light blanket from

the cabin, for the child's use at night, he left the cabin behind and proceeded onward as before.

He walked till late in the afternoon without discovering so much as a sign of the Indian settlement he was seeking. By this time his own pangs of hunger had become excruciating. It was still too early in the summer for berries or nuts to be ripe, and the half green things which he found where the sun shone the warmest were in no manner fit to be offered to the child, as food.

Arriving at another small valley, as the sun was dipping into the western tree-tops, the rover sat down for a rest, and to plan something better than this random wandering toward the sunset. He had chuckled encouragement to the child from time to time, laughing in the little fellow's face, but hardly had he caught at the subtle signs on the small face, at which a mother-parent would have stared wild-eyed in agony.

Now, however, as he sat the tiny man on the grass before him, he saw in the baby's eyes such a look as pierced him to the quick. For a moment the infinite wistfulness, the dumb questioning, the uncomplaining silence of it, made him think, or hope, the child was only sad. He got down on all fours at once.

"Partner," said he, jovially, "you are disappointed in me. I make poor shift as a mother. Do you want to be cuddled, or would you rather be tickled?"

He laid the little chap gently on his back and tried to repeat the frolic of the earlier hours. He rolled the small bronze body in the grass, as before, and petted him fondly. But the baby merely winked his eyes. He seemed about to cry, but he made no sound.

Adam's fingers ceased their play, for the joy departed from them swiftly.

"Maybe you're tired and sleepy," he crooned. "Shall I put on your shirt and sing you a little Indian lullaby? Yes? That's what he wants, little tired scamp."

He adjusted the abbreviated shirt, awkwardly, but tenderly, after which he held his partner in his arms and hummed and sang the words of a Wampanoag song, which he had heard in his boyhood, times without number. The song started with addresses to some of the elements, thus :

"Little Brook, it is night,
Be quiet, and let my baby sleep.

"Little wind, it is night,
Go away, and let my baby sleep.

"Little storm, it is night,
Be still, and let my baby sleep.

"Little wolf, it is night,
Howl not, and let my baby sleep."

and after many verses monotonously soothing, came an incantation :

"Great Spirit, I place my babe
Upon the soft fur of thy breast,
Knowing Thou wilt protect,
As I cannot protect ;
And therefore, oh Great Spirit,
Guard my child in slumber."

Adam sang this song like a pleading. But his little

partner could not sleep, or feared to sleep. Then the rover looked at the tiny face and realized that the child would soon be dying of starvation. At this he started to his feet, abruptly.

He had undergone the pains of hunger often, himself; he was not impatient now with the pangs in his stomach, nor the weakness in his muscles. But he could not bear the thought of the child so perishing, here in the wilderness.

He saw poor Wainsworth again, and heard him beg that the child be given a chance. He thought of the man's shattered life, his escape from persecution, his isolation, in which he had preferred the society of his Indian wife and child to association with his kind. Then he blamed himself for coming further into this deserted region, when he knew that by going back, at least he could find something for the child to eat—something that would save its life!

But he could not forget that he himself was a refugee. Wrongly or rightly, Randolph was still on his track. Nothing in his own case had been altered, but the case was no longer one concerning himself alone. He took the child on his arm, where he had carried him already many miles, and faced about.

“Partner, let them take me,” he said. “I wish them joy of it.”

He started back for Boston, for in the child's present extremity, the nearest place where he could be sure of finding food was the only one worthy a thought.

CHAPTER XXXIII.

REPUDIATED SILVER.

SOMETIME, along toward the middle of the night, Adam tripped, on a root which lay in his path, and in catching himself so that his small partner should not be injured, he sprained his foot. He proceeded onward without sparing the member, however, for he had begun to feel a fever of impatience.

His foot swelled. It finally pained him excessively, so that he limped. He wore away the night, but when the morning came, he was obliged to snatch an hour of sleep, so great was the sense of exhaustion come upon him.

His face had become pale. With his hair unkempt, his eyes expressive of the fever in his veins and his mouth somewhat drawn, he was not a little haggard, as he resumed his lame, onward march. The child in his arms was no burden to his enduring strength, but as a load on his heart the little chap was heavy indeed. Sleeping, the miniature man appeared to be sinking in a final rest, so wan had his tiny face become. Waking, he gazed at Adam with such a dumb inquiry ever present in his great, wistful eyes, that Rust began to wish he would complain—would cry, would make some little sound to break his baby silence.

They were obliged to rest frequently, throughout the day. Try as he might, Adam could not cover the ground rapidly. Whenever he resumed walking, after sitting for a moment on a log, or a rock, he found his foot had become so bad that, in the late afternoon, he gave up halting thus altogether.

The twilight came upon him, then the night-fall. At last, with a smothered cry of delight on his lips, he saw the gleam of a light. He had come to the farmhouse where he had stopped to return the English dandy's horse and to eat his last supper. Thinking thereby to disguise himself, even if only slightly, he halted, threw off his leather jerkin, sword and coat, turned the latter inside out and concealed his weapon and outside garment in the brush. Thus altered in appearance, he dragged his aching foot across the space between the woods and the house, where he knocked upon the door and entered.

"Who's there?" cried the farmer, in a fright which recent events had instilled in his being. He was a shaking old bachelor, suspected by many who knew him of being a miser with a great horde of gold on his premises.

Adam was confronted by the man, as soon as he stepped across the threshold.

"Food, man," he said, hoarsely. "Food, or this child will die!"

The man recognized him instantly. He fairly quaked with dread.

"Go out! Go out!" he cried. "I've no food here—I've nothing here!"

"Peace!" commanded Adam. "Bring me forth

something to eat for the child, you knave, or I shall find it for myself."

He looked terrible enough to execute a much more dreadful threat. The farmer retreated before him, cringing and whining.

"I have nothing, or you should have it," he said, with a whimper. "My neighbors—ten minutes' walk up the clearing—go to them. They have plenty, and I have nothing."

Adam remembered the scantiness of the fare he had tasted here before. Nevertheless it had been food, and anything now might save his little partner's life.

"Then you go, friend," he ordered. "Make haste and bring me what you can, from your neighbors'!"

The man seemed about to refuse. He changed his mind abruptly.

"I'll go. I'll go!" he hastened to say, and without his hat, or waiting for anything further, he hobbled out at the door and was gone.

Rust lost no time in ransacking the cupboard. To his unspeakable disappointment he found that the man had not spoken wide of the truth. There was as little here, in the way of a few gnawed crusts of bread and a rind of cheese, as might well stand between nothing and something to eat and to feed to a starving child. His heart sank within him. But then he thought that inasmuch as the farmer had told the truth about his larder, he would be the more likely to have spoken correctly about the neighbors. He would soon be back with something fit for the wee Narragansett.

Adam looked at the baby boy compassionately. The

little fellow was awake, looking up, winking slowly, asking his dumb, wistful question with his eyes.

Adam patted him softly while he waited. "I'm a wretched mother, little partner," he said. "But we'll soon have you banqueting, now. Can't you speak up a little bit? Don't you want to give old Adam just one little smile? No? Well, never mind. Little man is tired."

He had placed his charge in a chair. Soon growing impatient, he limped about the room, crunching a crust of bread in his teeth, abstractedly. Unable to endure the suspense, he went again to the cupboard and threw everything down, in his search for something fit for the child. There was nothing more than he had seen before. He went to the water pail and drank, for his mouth had found the crust a poor substitute for food.

Yet no sooner had he sipped the water than a sense of the deliciousness of the dry bread pervaded his being. He ran to gather up the other crusts at once and limped to the child in a frenzy of gladness.

"Here, little man," he said, kneeling down on the floor. "If you can only chew that up and then take a sip of water, you will think the King's kitchen has opened."

He gently thrust a small piece of the rock-hard bread between the little chap's lips, where, to his intense disappointment, it remained.

"Can't you chew it?" he said. "Just try, for old Adam."

The child was too weak to do anything but wink. Its appealing gaze was more than Adam could stand.

"What can Adam do for the little man?" he said.

He limped painfully back and forth again. The farmer should have returned before this. What could be keeping the wretch? The rover saw that the little life was fluttering, uncertainly, not yet sure of its wings on which to fly away.

"I have it!" he cried, in sudden exultation. "Bread and water!"

He hobbled across the room, snatched up a cup, crunched a fistful of crusts in his hand, put them in his cup and filled it half to the top with water. Then he stirred the hard pieces with his finger and crushed them smaller and padded them up against the side of the vessel, working the mass softer in feverish haste. Impatient to get results, he put the cup to the baby's lips.

"Drink," he coaxed. "Take a little, like a good partner. Can't you take a little weenty bit?"

Groaning, thus to find the small Narragansett so weak, he hobbled about to find a spoon, with which he came hastily limping back. To his joy then, he saw a little of the slightly nutritious water disappear between the silent lips. He crooned with delight, hitched himself closer and plied his spoon clumsily, but with all the patience of a woman.

The child began to take the nourishment with interest.

Adam was happy in the midst of this new-found expedient, when the door behind him was suddenly thrown open, violently, and in burst half a dozen constables, armed to the teeth and panting wildly.

"Give up! I arrest you in the name of the King!" cried the foremost of the men. He presented a pistol at the head of the kneeling man. "Take him!" he

screamed to his following, and before Rust could so much as rise, on his wounded foot, he was suddenly struggling in a mass of men who had fallen upon him.

He got to his feet. He knocked three of the constables endways. But his strength was gone quickly, so long had he been famished, and so far had he taxed his endurance. They overpowered him, making a noise of mad confusion. They threw him toward a chair. He made one cry of anguish and protest. Three of the scrambling clods fell together upon the little partner, and when they arose, his little heart had ceased to beat.

The farmer-miser now came worming his way through the door. He was laughing like a wolf.

"You've got him!" he cried. "I told you! I told you! Heh, heh, heh. I'm not in league with thieves and murderers. Here, here, take your silver! I'll none of your silver!"

He took from his pocket the coin which the rover had paid him to take back the Englishman's horse and threw it hysterically down at Adam's feet.

CHAPTER XXXIV.

LODGINGS FOR THE RETINUE.

THE beef-eaters arrived in the afternoon of the same day that Adam was arrested. Alighting from the coach, they did exactly what he had feared they would. They wended their way promptly to the Crow and Arrow.

Randolph and his henchmen, having missed their intended prey, at their first attempt, were engaged elsewhere in the town, attempting to make good their failure. Believing Rust would return and attempt to see Mistress Merrill, Randolph kept one or two of his creatures in the vicinity of David Donner's house day and night. But Gallows, being for the time totally disabled, had been domiciled at the tavern, in a small apartment off the tap-room, where he spent many hours of the day roaring out his exceeding displeasure at the turn of events and the consequences thereof, into which his friends had brought him.

Pike and Halberd appeared at the inn when the place was all but deserted. Naturally the tavern had become popular with the Royalists, but it had been gradually falling into disfavor with sailors and dock hands for several years.

Striding haughtily into the place, the beef-eaters accosted the landlord familiarly.

"My good fellow," said little Pike, "be kind enough to let the Sachem know that we have arrived and wait upon his pleasure."

"And assure him of the excellence of our health," said Halberd."

"I don't know what you mean," said the landlord, eying the pair suspiciously and cudgeling his brains to remember where and when he had seen them before. "I have no Mr. Sachem in the house."

"He has no Mr. Sachem in the house," said the beef-eaters, in chorus, turning to one another with raised eyebrows and indulgent smiles.

"This surpasses belief," said Halberd.

"My good friend, you mistook what we said," added Pike. "We are inquiring for The Sachem—not Mr. Sachem, but The Sachem."

"I don't know the Sachem," said the landlord, frowning upon the guests. "What do you want?"

"He don't know the Sachem!" said the comrades, again in chorus. They looked perfectly incredulous.

"Then I pity you for your loss," Pike remarked.

"But if he is not at this house, where is he?" asked Halberd.

"Tell us where to find him and we will burden you with wealth," Pike added, grandly.

The landlord began to be certain they were crazy. "How should I know who it is you seek?" he asked.

"Water! fetch me water!" roared Gallows, from the adjoining room.

"What disturbance is this?" Halberd wanted to know. He strode to the door and looked in at the moun-

tain of meat, propped up in bed, poulticed and patched past all semblance to himself. "Friend," Halberd said to him, boldly, "your voice needs bleeding."

"Ha!" bellowed Gallows, "you be a fool and I be the fool-killer! Let me get—Howtch!" He made this latter exclamation on attempting to rise from his lair.

Halberd and Pike both fell to the rear a step, at the awful voice of the brute, but no sooner did they see him sink helplessly down on the couch than they laughed in eloquent scorn.

"I should enjoy nothing better than to slay something large, before dinner," little Pike remarked.

"Tut. This is my recreation," said Halberd. "Come forth, friend, till I warm some cold steel in your belly."

"Leave be!" commanded the landlord, coming forward to shut the door between the rooms, and flapping his apron at the belligerent beef-eaters. "Let me know your wants, if you have them, and if not, be off about your business."

"Sensibly spoken," said Halberd. "All we desire of you is that you let the Sachem know we are come."

"But I said I didn't know this Sachem!" cried the exasperated boniface.

"True, true," said Pike. "But it seems too monstrous to be so."

"But," put in Halberd, "you must remember that wealthy young nobleman, who paved our way with gold, when we were with you a number of years ago. Surely you cannot yet have spent what we scattered in your house?"

“And you will certainly remember the drubbing we gave those varlets, with the flat of our swords, here in this very room—some dozen of the fellows there were in all,” added the other of the pair. “They dared to insinuate that we were beggars—aye, beggars, forsooth!”

The landlord remembered them now, clearly enough. He restrained himself from calling them vile names, by making an effort truly heroic.

“Oh, to be sure, I do recall it now,” he said, cunningly. “I believe your Sachem did even call here, to ask if you had come. Yes, yes. I think he said he meant to return here this afternoon again. Was he not a tall, noble-looking gentleman?”

“Like a king,” said Pike.

“With a manner like this,” added Halberd, strutting and swaggering across the room. “He should have walked in over several prostrate forms, in the manner of a prince and our associate.”

“The same, the very same,” agreed the landlord. “He is certain to be here within the hour. Sit down, gentlemen, and let me serve you, and then I shall be honored to have a look about, myself, to see if I may not find him.”

“Said like a scholar,” Halberd assured him.

“We do this honor to your house for his sake,” Pike added.

The two sat them down and the landlord hustled them out the vilest drink he could draw, tampered with, as it was, to add some crude substance, the effect of which on the brain was overpowering. The fellow saw the beef-eaters drinking and waited for nothing

more. He scampered away from the rear of his place, as fast as his limbs could convey him.

Fifteen minutes later a small army of constables arrived, captured the two brain-fuddled beef-eaters without the slightest resistance and carried them off to the sumptuous apartments of the city jail. There, with aching heads and crestfallen countenances, they discovered themselves to be, when the baleful effects of their drink had somewhat abated.

"By my fighting hand!" said Halberd, "I'd not be sworn that we have not been tricked."

CHAPTER XXXV.

GARDE OBTAINS THE JAIL KEYS.

UNBEKNOWN to his retinue, Adam was accommodated in the same jail where Pike and Halberd had been landed while the evening was still comparatively young. The body of the little Narragansett, brutally snatched from Adam's arms, had likewise been brought into Boston.

Randolph had lost no time in having Rust examined and declared a prisoner of the state, charged with a whole category of crimes against the peace and dignity of the King. To all of this, and to nearly all of their questions, Rust had made no reply whatsoever. He realized the uselessness of pitting his one voice against those of half a dozen perjured rascals, who came about him the moment it was known he had finally been taken, ready to swear to anything which would be likeliest to jeopardize his life.

Thus, before half-past eight that night, the whole of Boston was wagging its tongue over an astonishing story, instigated at once by Edward Randolph. This dangerous, blood-thirsty rascal, Rust, had been taken in the forest, whither he had fled to join his Indian wife, and in his struggles to avoid arrest he had slain his half-Indian child.

This was the indictment, mildly expressed, that

reached the ears of Garde Merrill concerning her lover. She was simply appalled. It was unbelievable, it was monstrous. She scorned to think it could possibly be true. And yet, if he had been in Boston several days before, as the story had it, why had she known nothing about it? The whole thing had been a gross fabrication. He could not have been in the town and going to a tavern to mix in a horrid brawl. He would certainly have come to see her immediately on his arrival. He had promised to return in about a week from a visit to the beef-eaters.

When she got as far as that, she suddenly tried to stop thinking. He had been gone many weeks instead of the one; the beef-eaters had not been with him when he had the alleged fight, nor when he was captured, and he had mentioned to her, on their walk from Plymouth, that he had once stopped at the Crow and Arrow, where the brawl was reported to have taken place.

Nearly frantic with the terrible thoughts in her head, Garde hastened to John Soam's to get what she could of sober truth, which John would have as no one else might in the town.

She was mentally distraught when she came to her uncle's. She had carried a dish belonging to her aunt Gertrude, to make an excuse for her late evening visit. She was more glad than she could have said that Prudence was away, for her cousin knew something of her feeling for Adam.

Garde, having been made welcome, had no need to ask questions. John Soam was telling the story of the night with countless repetitions. His wife cross-exam-

ined him in every direction which her womanly ingenuity could suggest.

Thus Garde discovered that it was undeniably true that Adam had been in town several days before ; that he had been engaged in a terrible fight, in which he had inflicted grave injuries on Randolph and one of his " peaceable officers " ; that he had then escaped back to the woods, from which, it was alleged, he had emerged solely for this fighting, and that, when captured, he had a half-Indian child in his possession.

John Soam had seen the body of the child himself. He had heard the examination, in his capacity of clerk to the court and magistrates. Rust was lame, he said, and he was a sullen man, who had returned no answers but such as cut wittily. He had not denied that the child was his own. He had absolutely refused to say whose it was and how he came to have it. He had come to the farmer's house, at the edge of the woods, for purposes of robbery. There was every reason to believe that he had consorted with the Indians, and that the child was his. It was a pretty child, but many thought it looked as if it had been shockingly abused. There could be no doubt that, when he had found himself being taken, he had profited by the confusion to slay the little half-Indian boy.

Garde's horror grew as she listened. She remembered terrible things that Adam had told her when he believed her a youth. He had excused Randolph's conduct with Hester Hodder, hinting broadly that, in a case he had in mind, he thought another young woman—in this instance Garde herself—ought to forgive such a treachery to honor. He had even men-

tioned that she, when dressed as a boy and browned, reminded him of a young Indian woman whom he had known and liked. He had lived with the Indians as a boy ; he had gone back to them as a man.

All those other dreadful half-confessions, in this new light, looked no longer innocent—the French damsel, the Countess, and the others. He had deceived her about going to New York to see the beef-eaters, she told herself, in agony. He had gone to the forest instead. And God only knew what things he had done in those silent woods ! Had he abandoned the mother of his child, as Randolph had done—or had he committed something worse ? for Hester, in the similar instance, had died so strangely.

At least it was plain that before Adam could marry again he would be obliged to abandon that Indian woman. And what if she were Indian ? Was she less a woman ? Would she suffer less agony ? Garde thought of Hester, and of how the wild young thing had begged her not to take away the man who had so cruelly wronged her. The picture was almost more than she could bear. The whole affair fell upon her heart with a weight that crushed her happiness into a shapeless, dying thing. In whatsoever direction she turned, Adam's own actions and words confronted her with the blank wall of hideous truth.

She knew now why, after he had walked all the way to Boston at her side, he had failed to appear at Grandther Donner's, for days and days. She saw it all, plainly—horribly plainly. It was so absolutely unescapable. And yet, he had seemed so honest ; he had spoken so of love ; he had so convinced her heart and

her soul of his purity, nobility and worth ! She loved him still. She could not avoid this. It had grown up with her ; it had become a part of her very being. She would love him always, but—she could not become his wife—not after this—never ! The thought of such a thing made her shiver. His perfidy was almost greater than Randolph's—as an Indian woman would have been so much more innocent and trustful than even Hester.

Her heart cried. “ Oh ! ” and yet again, “ Oh ! ” in its anguish. If he had only left some little loophole for doubt—if he had only denied their accusations—if only he had not said those terrible things to her, upon the highway, perhaps——“ No, no, no, no,” she cried, in her soul ; this was compromising with loathsome dishonor. Far better it was that the awful truth was so indisputably established ! It left her no ground for excusing his deeds, at the dictates of her unreasoning love ! Yet, oh, it had been so sweet to believe in him, to love him without reserve, to trust her very soul in his keeping ! She wrung her hands under the table, as she listened, with ears that seemed traitors to her love, to all that her uncle could add to the story.

She soon learned that Adam was Randolph's particular prisoner ; that there had been some old-time grudge between them, and that the crafty man of power would undoubtedly make an effort to hang his captive.

At this her womanly inconsequence was suddenly aroused. He might be guilty, but she had always thought him noble and good. She would never marry him, after this, but she would love him forever. He

had been her idol, her king. He must live, for at least she had a right to keep enshrined in her heart the thought of him, pulsating heart to heart with her, as once he had. No! He must not be permitted to die—not like this—not in infamy—not at the hands of this monster of iniquity—this Randolph!

It was not that she had the slightest hope that he could ever be the same to her again, or that she should ever wish to see him again, but at least he had a right to live, to redeem himself, partially, perhaps to suffer and to sorrow for his deeds. Indeed he must so live—he must so redeem himself for her sake—to justify the love and the trust she had given him out of her heart!

She felt that she should choke if she did not soon get out in the air. She wanted to run to the prison, hammer with her fist on the gate, demand admittance and set him free—free from Randolph's clutches. But she knew this was madness. Her mouth grew parched and dry with her excitement, so tremendously held in control. How could she manage to get him free? Oh, if only she dared to tell her uncle John and get him to help her!

He had the duplicate keys to every door in the jail. He brought them home night after night and hung them up on—There they were, now! They hung there within reach of her hand! Her heart knocked and beat in her bosom, as if it were hammering down the barriers to Adam's cell. She weaved dizzily, with the possibilities of the moment. Just to take those keys and run—that was all, and the trick would be done. He could go—and their love would be a thing of living death!

She meant to take those keys. The impulse swayed her whole being. She felt she would die rather than miss her opportunity. With clenched hands and with set jaws she arose to her feet.

"I must be going home," she said, with apparent calm. "Oh, what was that?"

"What was what?" said her aunt and uncle together.

"Why—some noise, in the other room," she said with a tremor easily simulated, in her excited state. "I am sure I heard something in there, moving!"

"Hum—let's see," said John.

"It might be that I left the window open," said Goodwife Soam.

The man took the lamp, opened the door to the adjoining apartment, and went in, followed by his wife. Garde, with a gasp, and a clutching at her heart, lifted the keys from their nail and dropped them into her pocket with a barely audible jingle. She followed her aunt a second later.

"Why, it was—nothing, after all," she said, weaving a trifle in her stress of emotion and nervousness. "But the window was up, as you said. I'm glad that was all. Good night."

"Good night," said John Soam and his wife, from the window which John was pushing down, and without waiting another minute, Garde let herself out and sped away in the darkness.

CHAPTER XXXVI.

GARDE'S ORDEAL.

How to get the keys into Adam's possession, now that she had them in her own, was the first question that presented itself to the mind of Garde. Her ruse at her uncle's had been so quickly and easily planned and executed that she had almost fancied Adam freed already. Yet as she hastened homeward, filled with conflicting emotions of excitement, grief and despair, she soon comprehended that her task had not as yet really begun.

Could she only ascertain in what portion of the prison the rover was incarcerated, she thought it might be possible to convey him the keys through the window, provided he had one in his cell. Thinking of this, she naturally remembered the jailer's wife, a poor ailing creature, who lived in the building, with her husband, and to whom Goody Dune had ministered, times without number, frequently sending Garde with simples to relieve her of multitudinous aches and pains. This was her cue. She could take her some of the herbs of which a plentiful stock had been collected in the Donner household, for the use of her grandfather.

Fortunately David Donner had so far progressed, if not toward recovery, then at least toward change, that he slept for hours, like a weary child, waking after

dreamless slumber all pink and prattling. He was thus asleep when she came to the house. She was therefore soon on her way to the prison, her simples in a small basket, hung on her arm.

The hour was unusual for any one thus to be visiting the jailer's wife, so that the good woman, when Garde came in, after knocking, was obviously surprised at the honor.

"Oh, Mrs. Weaver," said the girl, hurriedly, "I heard you had been having trouble here to-day, and I knew how it always upsets you, and Goody had given me all these simples to bring, three days ago, so I thought I had better bring them to you the moment I knew you were being so worried."

It was a fact that the jailer's wife was invariably very much distressed when guests were thrust upon their hospitality. She always feared at first that they would get away, and afterward that they would not, as her abhorrence and then her sympathy came respectively into play. She also conjectured all manner of terrible things that might at any moment happen to Blessedness Weaver, her worthy husband. To-night she was particularly nervous, owing to the sudden increase in the jail's population and the blood-freezing details and rumors afloat as to the nature of the company assembled under the roof of the building.

"Dear me, lassie," she said, in answer to Garde's well-chosen speech, "do come in directly. I am that fidgety and poorly, the night! Lauk, lassie, but you are a dear, thoughtful heart, and I shall never forget you for this. And we have such terrible gentlemen, the night!"

She always called the guests gentlemen, till she found out which way lay the sympathies of a given visitor, when they all became rogues, forthwith, if she found herself encouraged to this violent language. Later on, again, when her sympathies for their plight were aroused, they were restored to their former social appellations.

"Oh, I am so sorry for you!" said Garde. "I had heard of one prisoner; but could you have had more than one?"

"Lauk, yes," said the woman rolling her eyes heavenward. "They took the principal rogue in the woods, I believe, but they captured his two brutal companions at the Crow and Arrow in the afternoon."

This was news to Garde. She recognized the beef-eaters from this vivid description. If Adam had his friends at his side, he must be much more contented, and they would all be planning to escape.

"And so all three are under lock and key, safely together?" she said, innocently. "How fortunate!"

"Oh dear me, no," corrected Mrs. Weaver. "The two taken by daylight are together in the southern exposure, while the last one was thrust in the dungeon. Oh Lauk, Mistress, but he is a terrible man!"

Garde felt her heart sink, even though it never ceased for a moment to beat so hard that it pained her. Adam in a dungeon! How in the world could she ever manage to get the keys to him now? Dungeons, she knew, were under the ground; they were dank, death-dealing places, with moldy straw in one corner and with slimy rocks for walls. She could have cried in her sudden

wretchedness of spirit, although it could never mean anything to her, whether Adam lived or died, in prison or out. However, she mastered herself splendidly.

“A dungeon?” she said. “Oh, I didn’t know you had a dungeon here. It must be very deep down in the earth.”

“It’s a creepy place; oh lauk, it’s that creepy!” said the woman. “But it’s not so deep, dearie. It’s nine steps down. I’ve counted the steps many’s the time. But it is where we puts the monstrously wicked rogues, such as this bloodthirsty man! And it’s that dark, my dear—oh lauk, what a place to spend the night!”

“Of course it must be dark,” said Garde, suppressing her eagerness. “They couldn’t have a window in such a place as that.”

“Indeed we have, though; we’ve a window in every room in the place,” corrected the jailer’s wife, with commendable pride in the architectural arrangements. “Oh yes, it has its window, no bigger than my hand, lassie, and slanting up through the rock, but it’s a rare little light it lets in to the poor gentlemen down below!”

“I’m glad he—the prisoners here have some light,” said Garde, honestly, “but I don’t see where such a window could be.”

“It’s on the dark side of the house, night and day the same,” explained Mrs. Weaver. “It’s around on the dark side, where no one would find it in a month of Sundays, just about the length of my foot above the ground. Such a small thing it is, and the light it lets

in is that little ! Oh lauk, I'm feeling worse to be thinking upon it ! ”

“ Then you mustn't talk about it any more,” Garde assured her, sympathetically. “ And I must be going home. I do hope the simples will make you better, and I'm so glad I came. I must say good night, for I suppose you will all be going to bed very soon.”

“ I shall be there directly,” Mrs. Weaver informed her, “ but dear me, Blessedness won't be touching a pillow for an hour, and then he'll sleep with his stockings on. He always does the first night with new rogues in the house. Good night, dearie, and God bless you for a sweet child.”

Garde went out and walked slowly toward Grandther Donner's. She had an hour to wear away, for she would not dare to be searching about the jail before the jailer at least retired to his couch.

The time was one of dread and chills. Her teeth chattered, not from any suggestion of cold in the night air, but from the nervous strain of this time of suspense. She had never been so frightened of any action in her life, as she was when at length she crept back to the prison, through the dark, deserted streets, and began to search about to find the tiny window of which Mrs. Weaver had spoken.

There were two dark sides to the building. One was constantly in the shadow of a tavern, which almost abutted against it, while the other was on the northern face of the building, in a narrow street. Garde went first to the northern exposure, for in order to get at the other shaded side, she would have been obliged to climb a low, brick wall.

Scarcely had she more than come to her destination, and begun her feverish search, before she heard the sound of distant footsteps, which rapidly approached. She crouched in a black little niche, in fear, with a violent commotion in her breast which threatened to drop her down in a swoon. Almost stepping on her toes, some pedestrian passed, leaving the girl so horribly weak that she shut her eyes and leaned against the wall, laboring to get her breath.

Nerved again by the things Mrs. Weaver had told her, she came out of her hiding-place, after several minutes, and feeling the cold rock-wall she passed eagerly along, shaking with her chill and fearing to breathe too loud, in the silence.

She was doomed here to bitter disappointment. The window was not to be found. She searched again and again, unwilling to give it up, but it was not there. She realized that she must climb the brick barrier, and try on the other side of the building.

She found the wall not difficult to surmount, but when she jumped down, on the further side, she struck on a heap of broken crockery, thrown out from the tavern.

She crouched down instantly, for the noise she had made attracted the notice of some one in the public house. A door at the rear of the hostelry was thrown open and a man looked out. He appeared to be looking straight at her and listening.

"Must have been a cat," he said, to somebody back in the house, and he disappeared and closed the door.

Garde could not have been any more wrought upon than the whole affair had made her already. She could

not become calm. She could merely wait for moments of partial relief from overwhelming emotions.

Thus in time she was creeping along again, feeling the dark stone as before and peering vainly and desperately into the shadows which lay so densely upon the whole enclosure. Hastily she traversed the whole length of the wall. She arrived at the far end, ready to sink down and cry in anguish. She had not discovered the window.

Back again she went, choking back hysterical sobs and bruising her delicate hands on the rough rocks, as she played with her fingers along that grim, dark pile. She failed again.

Sitting where she was, in the grass, which was growing rank in the place, she clasped her hands in despair. She would have to give it up. There was some mistake. There was no window.

Yet once more she would try. She could not give it up. The dungeon's horrors and the terrible character of Edward Randolph made her fear that if the morning came before Adam was free, he would no longer have need for freedom, nor light.

Slowly, this time, and digging at the base of the stone-wall that rose above her, she felt down to the very roots of the grass, for the aperture which represented a window. To her unspeakable joy, her fingers suddenly ran into an absolute hole in the solid rock, in a matted growth of roots and grass, which had grown up about it!

She sank down, momentarily overcome with this discovery. It was too much to believe. She felt she was almost dying, so insupportable was the agitation of her heart. But she presently clutched at the grass and

tore it away in a mad fever of haste. She dug, with her fingers and her finger nails. She could smell the odor of the bruised grass, and then the wholesome fragrance of earth. She had soon uncovered a small square opening, no larger, as the jailer's wife had said, than a good-sized hand.

On her knees as she was, she bent her head down to a level with the hole and put her lips close to the opening. She tried to speak, but such a faintness came upon her that she could not utter a sound. She had worked with a tremendous resolution toward this end, and now the flood of thoughts of everything said and done that evening, came upon her and rendered her dumb, with emotion and dread.

Making a great effort she essayed to speak again. Once more she failed. But she waited doggedly, for the power she knew would not desert her in the end. Thus for the third time she mustered all her strength and leaned down to the window.

"Adam," she said, faintly, and then she waited, breathlessly.

There was no response. There was not a sound from that tomb, the dankness of which she now began to detect in her nostrils.

"Adam!" she repeated, this time more strongly.

Some subterranean rustling then came to her ears.

"Adam! Oh, Adam!" she said, in a voice that trembled uncontrollably.

"Who's that? Who's speaking? Is it you, John Rosella?" came in a rumble from the dungeon.

She failed to recognize his voice, so altered did the passage from his place of imprisonment make it.

"Oh, is that you, Adam—Mr. Rust?" she asked, trembling violently.

"Garde!" he said, joyously. "Garde! Oh, my darling! Yes, it's I. Where are you? What have you done?"

Garde felt her strength leave her treacherously. Thus to hear the endearing names leap upward to her from that terrible place was too much to bear, after all she had learned.

"Here—here are the keys," she whispered down to him, haltingly. "And your friends—your two companions—they are also in the prison. I hope—I hope you can find your way out. I am dropping them down—the keys. Here they come." She tossed the bunch, which she had taken from her pocket with nerveless fingers, and now she heard the metallic clink, as they struck the floor, come faintly up through the aperture.

Adam was starting to say something. She dared not wait to listen. Now that her task was done, she knew she would absolutely collapse, if she did not at once bestir herself to flee.

"I mustn't stop!" she said to him, a little wildly. "Be careful. Good-by," and without even waiting to hear him answer, she arose, thrust a bunch of grass back into place over the opening, and hastened away.

CHAPTER XXXVII.

RATS IN THE ARMORY.

ADAM'S disappointment, when he got no more responses to the eager questions and blessings he breathed upward to his unseen sweetheart, was keener than all the anguish he had felt at being so foully imprisoned. He had caught up the keys, quickly enough, but when he failed to catch any more of her trembling words he felt more deserted and surrounded by the blackness than he had been in all this new experience. However, his heart was soon tripping with gladness.

At least it was Garde who had come to save him. Love was his guardian angel. He could face the world full of foes, after this. He grew impatient, abruptly, to get out of the dungeon at once and go to Garde—his brave, darling Garde!

Then he thought of the beef-eaters. He had fancied he heard their voices, as Randolph's men had been taking him into the prison corridor. It had seemed impossible that they had already arrived and been apprehended till he remembered how many days it had been since last he had seen them.

Having been asleep when Garde first called down to him, through the tiny air-passage, the rover was a little refreshed. But he was still nearly famished for something to eat, having been provided only with a dry

chunk of bread, as large as his fist, and a jug of water. He was also quite lame, for he had not been able to do anything for his wounded foot.

Nevertheless he was alert, now, for his slumber of an hour had been profoundly deep and his constitution was one of great elasticity, rapidly responding to the most inconsiderable restorative influence. He hobbled about in his small den, finding the door without difficulty, after which he tried the lock with key after key, on the bunch, until he thought he had rejected all, when his high hopes came swiftly tumbling down.

The key to the dungeon had not been found among the lot on the ring !

In his weakened condition this apparent discovery was prostrating in its dire effect. He suffered more than he would have done had there been no attempt made to free him at all. He felt cold beads of perspiration break out on his brow. Hope for himself and the beef-eaters, snatched away almost as soon as given, unnerved him. Nevertheless he pulled himself together, to try every key in the bunch again.

The first one he handled entered the lock and threw back the bolt.

Cautiously swinging the door open, he suddenly started, at the sound of some one approaching in the corridor. In a second he was back in the dark hole and had locked the door again upon himself. Weaver, the jailer, making an unusual round of the premises, came down the dungeon-steps and tried the door. Satisfied that all was well, he proceeded onward to his bed.

Adam lost little time in again starting forth. This

time he locked the dungeon and took his bunch of keys with him. He climbed the nine steps, which the jailer's wife had so frequently counted, and found himself in the corridor, which was lighted by a single lamp, which was small and odorous. Noting his bearings, he limped along toward the cell where he thought he had heard the beef-eaters talking.

There was no sound to give him guidance now, and there were several doors confronting him, behind any one of which his retinue might be locked. It was a matter presenting necessities for nicety in judgment. If he were to open the door on some wrong prisoner, the ensuing disturbance would be most unfortunate. Moreover, he did not know but what there might be guards galore in some of the jail-apartments. It would not do to call, or to whisper, for the sake of attracting the beef-eaters' attention, for obvious reasons.

There was nothing for it but to open door after door till he found the faithful pair. Luckily the doors were numbered, and he found there were corresponding numbers on the keys. There being no choice, he unlocked the first door he saw. Shifting the bolt cautiously, he was presently able to listen for anything like a sound inside the cell.

He could hear nothing. The room was empty. To the next door he went, and repeated his simple experiment. This apartment proved to be, not a cell, but a place in which all manner of rubbish had been thrown. It also contained swords, pistols, some blunderbusses and other arms. The room, indeed, was the prison armory. Adam nodded at this discovery as being good, but it left him as far as before from his friends. Leav-

ing this door unlocked, he went back in the other direction and tried again.

Listening now, as before, upon opening a second cell, he heard snoring. Better than this, it was snoring that he knew. He went in and nudged the retinue with his foot.

“What, ho! Who knocks?” said Halberd, in a sleepy growl.

“Be quiet,” said Adam. “Get up, the two of you, quickly. “We are about to seek more commodious apartments.”

“The Sachem!” said Pike.

“Who else,” answered Halberd. “Sire, I have been expecting this kindness these three hours.”

“You may expect to be hanged, in the morning, if you do not shut your mouth and come with me instantly,” said Rust.

“I was dreaming of my wedding with a fair princess,” said Pike. “These are no days of chivalry, when a man will leave so sweet a damsel in so vile a place.”

“What have you done with your swords and side arms?” the Sachem demanded, in a whisper. “Did they take them from you?”

“They did. Else we had slain the whole score of rascals that took us,” said Halberd.

“Make haste, then, till we arm anew,” instructed the rover.

He locked the door behind them and led the way to the armory at once. They had gone half the distance to the place when there came a clanking of opening doors, a rattle of scabbards, a rumble of muffled voices

and the tramp of many feet, around in the angle of the corridor, leading to the outside world.

“Quick ! Quick !” commanded Adam, and darting forward, lame foot and all, to the armory-door, he opened it, thrust in the beef-eaters, with a word of admonition to beware of making a noise, and closed the barrier, only as Randolph and six of his creatures came tip-toeing down the passage and stopped fairly opposite where Adam was standing.

The rover reached out in the dark of the room they were in, as he braced silently against the door, and felt his hand come in contact with a sword, which he had noted when first he peered into the room. He could hear the men outside, whispering.

Weaver was with them, pale and frightened at what he knew these midnight visitors contemplated doing. He dared not make the slightest protest ; his master stood before him.

“Here, is this the room above the dungeon ?” said Randolph. He laid his hand on the knob, the inside mate of which Adam was holding.

“No, sir, this is the room, here upon the other side,” said Weaver. “It’s a few steps further along.”

The private executioners, with their chief, were moving away, when one of the beef-eaters stepped upon something on the floor of the armory, making a sound that seemed terrific.

“What was that ?” demanded Randolph, quickly.

“We have rats in the property chamber,” said Weaver, honestly.

“It sounded too big for rats,” said the voice of Psalms Higglar, whom Adam readily identified.

“We may look there if you like,” said the jailer.

“Never mind the rats at present,” dictated Randolph. “Show us the room above the cellar.”

The other door could then be heard to open and to close behind the visitors. Adam snatched up swords for three on the instant.

“Here, take it—and not a word,” he breathed, thrusting a weapon upon each of his trembling companions. “If they come for us—fight!”

Silently and slowly he reopened the door, having buckled a sword upon him. There came a light patter of footsteps on the corridor floor. Just as the rover was stepping forth, Psalms Higgler, who had not been satisfied with the theory of the rats, came gliding to the spot. He and Adam suddenly faced one another, a foot apart. The startled little monster stared wildly for the briefest part of a second and then would have fallen back, yelling like a demon to raise the alarm.

Pouncing upon him, without a sound, yet with the terrible strength and nimbleness of a tiger, Adam clutched him fiercely by the neck, with both his powerful hands, and choking back the yell already starting to the creature’s lips, lifted him bodily off the floor, to prevent him from kicking upon it, to raise a disturbance, and carried him, squirming and writhing, to the door by which the visitors had so recently entered.

“Open the door! Open the door and get out!” ordered Rust of his followers, sternly, never for a moment relaxing his grip or his lift on Higgler. “Lift the bar! Lift it! There!”

The door swung open. The beef-eaters sprang outside, trying both to go at once. The commotion they

made rang through the building. Adam was after them swiftly, forgetting to limp, as he felt the outside air in his face.

Higgler by this was becoming absolutely limp. Adam dropped him on the ground, where he lay, barely left alive and unable to move or to speak.

Adam had the keys in his pocket, the largest one uppermost. This was the one to this outside door. He could hear the men inside running toward the spot and already shouting the alarm. He dared to lock the door, deliberately, and to pull out the key and put it again in his pocket. Then he calmly drew the borrowed sword from its scabbard, rammed its end smartly home, in the key-hole and snapped it off short, spiking the aperture completely.

Already the beef-eaters were running up the street. Psalms Higgler was drawing his breath in awful gasps, where he lay.

"Good friend, farewell," said Rust to him, cheerfully. "I shall be pleased to report you an excellent rat-catcher, at the earliest opportunity afforded."

He disappeared from Higgler's ken in a twinkling and soon overtook his retinue, making good time for the country.

CHAPTER XXXVIII.

LOVE'S LONG GOOD-BY.

AWARE that his ruse in locking the jail upon his jailers would hold them only till they could think of taking off the lock and knocking out the sword-end, Adam was nevertheless determined upon going to David Donner's residence, for the purpose of seeing Mistress Garde.

With this purpose in view, and expecting his pursuers to be soon on a keen race for the open flats, which he had been known to cross before, in his successful escape to the woods, he led his retinue straight off at right angles from such a course, and brought them in fifteen minutes to the silent ship-yard of William Phipps.

Here, with small ado, they climbed the fence and struck across the enclosure, past the gaunt skeleton of a ship, growing on the ways, and so came to a quiet bit of water, at the private landing, where three small boats were moored in safety.

The trio were soon aboard the lightest skiff and rowing her westward, with silent, effectual strokes. Guided by the rover, the beef-eaters steered for the shore, and after a ten-minute pull Adam landed near the spot where he had sat upon a rock, waiting for

night, on the occasion of his last meeting with his sweetheart.

"Wait for me here," he said. "I shall not be long."

He was soon at the gate and then in the garden. There was not a sound to be heard. The house was dark. He raised a little whistle, as he slowly walked about the place, watching the windows intently.

Garde heard him. She was up. She had not had a moment of peace or freedom from dreadful suspense since arriving at the house, while waiting, listening, starting at all those uncanny sounds of stretching, in which a building will indulge itself at night. Greater unhappiness or despair she had never known, nor greater worry, fearing that Adam would come, and then fearing more that he would not.

When she heard him whistle, her heart seemed suddenly dislodged in her bosom. Her breath came laboredly. She opened the window in the kitchen, this room being furthest from her grandfather's apartment, and saw Adam limp eagerly toward her.

"Garde!—Sweetheart!" he said.

"Oh—oh, you—you got away," she faltered, faintly. "Here, I have—tied you up—a luncheon. Take it, please, and—and you had better go—at once."

"God bless you!" said Adam, stuffing the parcel she gave him inside his coat. "I have brought you back the keys. My Garde! My own blessed sweetheart. Oh, Garde, dearest, come out to me, just for a moment—just for one little good-by."

"I—I cannot," Garde said, fighting heroically against the greatest temptation she had ever known. "We must say—good-by, now, and I must——"

"Yes, I know, dear," he broke in impetuously, "but just for a moment, just——"

He was at the window. He tried to take her hands, to draw her toward him. She shrank away with an action so strange that his sentence died on his lips. "Why, Garde," he said, "can't I even touch your hands?"

She shook her head. He could barely see her, in the pale light which the stars diffused.

"I—I must never see—never see you—again," she stammered, painfully, "we must say—say good-by."

"You must never—— Garde—why—we must say— But, Garde, dear,—I don't understand you. What does all this mean?"

"Oh, please go—now," she said. "That is all—all I can say. It must be good-by."

Adam was made dumb for a moment. He stared at her unbelievably. He passed his hand across his brow, as if he feared his fasting and long-endured labors had weakened his mind.

"What in heaven's name has happened?" he said, as if partially to himself. "Am I Adam Rust? Are you Garde? Say good-by?—Dearest, has anything happened?"

She nodded to him, forcing back the sob that arose in her throat. "Something—something has happened," she repeated. For maidenly shame she could not broach the subject of the Indian child.

He was silent for a moment before replying.

"But you came to-night and gave me the keys, an hour or so ago," he said, in wonderment and confusion. "You did that?"

"I—couldn't—do less," she answered, mastering her love and anguish by a mighty resolution.

"Do you mean—you would have done the same for anybody?" he asked. And seeing her nod an affirmative he gave a little laugh. "I am crazy now, or I have been crazy before," he told himself. "Something has happened. Something—Of course—it couldn't help happening, in time. Some one has told you—I might have known it would happen . . . And yet—you once said you could wait for me fifty years. And I believed it. . . . Well, I thank you. I have been amused."

His broken sentences seemed to Garde to fill in the possible gaps of the story—to make his confession complete. But Adam had, in reality, stopped himself on the verge of accusing her of listening to the love-making of some one other than himself, in his absence.

She made no reply to what he had said. She felt there was absolutely nothing she could say. Her heart would have cried out to him wildly. When he spoke so lightly of the fifty years which she could have waited, she swayed where she stood, ready to drop. Almost one atom more of impulse and she would have thrown herself in his arms, crying out her love passionately, in defiance of the story of his perfidy. But her honor, her maidenly resolution, steeled her in the nick of time. Though her heart should break, she could not accept the gilded offer of such a love.

"Oh, Garde—sweetheart, forgive me," said Adam, after a moment of terrible silence. "I have wronged you. Forgive me and tell me it is all some nightmare—some dreadful——"

The night stillness was broken by the sound of men

running swiftly up the street. Randolph had thought of the possibility of Adam's visit to Mistress Merrill.

Garde heard and comprehended. Rust heard and was careless.

"Oh, go, Ad—Mr. Rust, please go at once," pleaded the girl already closing down the window.

"Garde! Garde!—not forever?" cried the man in a last despair.

"Forever," she answered, so faintly that he barely heard, and then the window came down to its place.

Limping back into the shadow, at the rear of the garden, Adam lay out full length on the ground, as two tiptoeing figures entered the gate and came sneaking silently about the somber house. He saw them make a circuit of the garden. One of them walked to within a rod of where he lay—therefore within a rod of death,—and then turned uncertainly away and retired from the place with his fellow-hound.

The rover heard them go on up the street, hurriedly making toward the woods. He came back to the place by the window, at last, and whistled softly once again, unable to believe that what he had heard could be so. There must be some explanation, if only he could get it.

There was no response, partially for the reason that Garde had sunk down upon the floor, on the other side of the window, in a dead faint.

His lameness fully upon him again, Adam hobbled a few steps away, halted to look back, yearningly, and then once more dragged himself off, to join the faithful beef-eaters, waiting in patience with the boat.

CHAPTER XXXIX.

MUTATIONS.

WHILE Garde, heart-broken, pale and ill, was restoring her uncle's keys to their accustomed hook, in the morning, Adam and his retinue were taking a much needed sleep in the woods.

Having recovered his own good sword and his leather jerkin, from the place where he had concealed them, on the evening of his capture, he had led the beef-eaters into a maze of trees where no one in Boston could have found them, and here he was doing his best to prove himself a cheerful and worthy companion, to share their natural distresses.

Refusing at first to eat of the luncheon provided by Garde, the rover finally yielded to the importunities of his companions, and thereby got much needed refreshment. By noon they were far on their way toward New Amsterdam, their only safe destination. They kept close to the edge of the woods, as they went, remaining thereby in touch with the farms, on which they depended, in their penniless condition, for something to eat.

By sheer perversity, Adam wore away his lameness. He bathed his foot often and he also wrapped it in leaves, the beneficent qualities of which he had learned from the Indians, years before, and this did as much,

or more, than his doggedness to make repairs in the injured tendons.

They were many days on this wearisome march which contrasted, for Adam, so harshly with that other stroll, to Boston, from Plymouth. On many occasions they went hungry for a day and a night together. But what with cheer and good water, they lost nothing of their health.

With boots beginning to gape at the toes, and with raiment dusty and faded, they arrived, at last, at the modest house, at the corner of Cedar and William streets, in New Amsterdam, where Captain William Kidd resided with his wife. Here they were made welcome. On behalf of himself and his comrades, Adam presently secured a working passage to Hispaniola, where he meant to rejoin William Phipps, in the search for the sunken treasure. He could think of nothing else to do, and he had no longer the slightest desire to remain on American soil.

Prior to sailing, however, he wrote a long, detailed account of his finding the man and his Indian child, with all the incidents related thereto, which he forwarded straight to Henry Wainsworth. This concluded his duties. He only regretted, he said in his letter to Henry, that he could not apprise him of what disposition had been made of the body of the little man, Henry's nephew, when the minions of Randolph took it in their charge.

This letter came duly into Henry Wainsworth's possession. Having been aware, as no other man in Massachusetts was, that his refugee brother was living his isolated life in the woods, Henry was much overcome

by this sad intelligence. He made what cautious inquiries he dared, with the purpose of ascertaining what had become of the little body. He then made a pilgrimage into the woods, stood above the grave which Adam had made, and then, taking a few worthless trinkets, as mementoes, from the deserted cabin, he came sadly away.

But not Henry's sadness, nor yet that of Garde, served to do more than to signalize the sense of affliction which the citizens of the colony felt had come upon them. They had been a joyless people, with their minds and their bodies dressed in the somber hues suggested by a morbid condition of religious meditation, but at least they had enjoyed the freedom for which they had come so far and fought so persistently. With their charter gone, and the swift descent upon them of the many things which they had found intolerable in England, they were a melancholy, hopeless people indeed.

But even as Garde's sorrow typified that of her fellow-beings, so did the fortitude and uncomplaining courage, with which she endured her burden, typify the stolid suffering of the citizens of Massachusetts, in this hour of their first great "national" woe.

The summer ripened and passed. The autumn heralded the ermine-robed King Winter, with glorious pageantry. The trees put on their cloth of gold and crimson, and when the hoary monarch came, the millions of leaves strewed his path, and, prostrate before his march, laid their matchless tapestry beneath his merciless feet.

During all this time, Randolph had made no sign to-

ward his revenge upon Garde, for the scorn with which she had cast him from her side. No petty vengeance would gratify his malignant spirit. The whole colony must suffer for this indignity, and Garde and her grandfather should feel his hand mightily, when all was ready. He prepared his way with extreme caution. He was never hurried. He laid wires to perform his mischief far ahead. Indeed he lingered almost too long, in his greed to prolong his own anticipation of what was to be.

Thus in December of that year, 1686, the frigate "Kingfisher," from England, brought to the colony their newly-appointed Governor, Sir Edmund Andros, who assumed the reins of power with an absolute thoroughness which left Randolph somewhat shorn of his capacity for working evil.

Andros, who had formerly been Governor for New York, for a matter of three years, was a person of commendable character, in many respects, but the policy which he had come to put into being and force was stupid, oppressive and offensive to the people he had to govern. Being the thorough Tory that he was, he enforced the policy with a vigor which brought upon him the detestation of the Puritans, who visited the errors he was ordered to commit upon his own less guilty head.

The Puritans, in the extremes to which they had fled, in their separation from the English forms of worship, had adopted a rigid simplicity in which the whole fabric of ceremonials had been swept away bodily. They rang no bells for their divine service; they regarded marriage as a civil contract, purely; they

observed no festivals nor holidays of the church ; they buried their dead in stolid silence. They abhorred the English rites.

Governor Andros inaugurated countless ceremonies. That very Christmas the English party of Boston held high revel in the city. The Puritans refused to close their shops, or to join either in rites or merriment. They brought in their fire-wood and went about their business, grim-faced and scowling darkly upon the innovations come among them, with their fascinations for the young and their enchantment of the frivolous.

The offenses against their rigid notions increased rapidly. In February they beheld, with horror, the introduction of a new invention of the devil. One Joseph Mayhem paraded in the main street of Boston with a rooster fastened on his back,—where it flapped its wings frantically,—while in his hand the fellow carried a bell, on which he made a dreadful din as he walked. Behind him came a number of ruffians, blindfolded and armed with cart-whips. Under pretense of striking at Mayhem and the chanticleer, they cut at the passers-by, roaring with laughter and otherwise increasing the attention which their conduct attracted. This exhibition was thought to smack of Papacy and the hated days of Laud.

The church itself was invaded. There was as yet no Church of England in the town. Governor Andros therefore attended with the Puritans, at their own house of meeting, but to their unnameable horror, he compelled Goodman Needham, the sexton, to ring the bell, according to English usage.

Rebellion being impossible, the Puritans nursed their

grievances in sullen stolidity. They were powerless, but never hopeless of their opportunity still to come.

Taxation came as a consequence of the pomp in which the new Governor conceived it to be his right to exist, as well as the natural result of his glowing reports to England that the people could be made to disgorge and would not resist.

To crown their heritage of woe, Edward Randolph, profiting by their already established fanaticism and ripeness for the folly, subtly introduced and finally fastened upon them that curse of superstitious ignorance, which was doomed to become such a blot upon their page of history—the “detection” of and persecutions for witchcraft.

CHAPTER XL.

GOLDEN OYSTERS.

CAPTAIN WILLIAM PHIPPS, when Adam left him at Jamaica, had returned, as he had said he intended, to the waters wherein the old Spanish galleon, with her golden treasure, was supposed to have sunk. He had met with a small measure of luck, for an old sailor had pointed out what he alleged to be the exact reef of rocks on which the galleon had split, half a century before. This spot was a few leagues to the north of Port de la Plata.

Having examined the place without success, Phipps had then discovered that his crew was not reliable and the ship not much better, in point of soundness. He had therefore headed for England, coming in due season to anchor in the Thames.

Undaunted by the failure which his enterprise had been, he sought out the King, reported what he had done, and requested the use of another ship and a better lot of men.

James was amused and entertained. He commended the bold skipper on his courage and his tenacity of purpose ; he believed his story. But he shook his head at the thought of furnishing funds and a new ship and crew for further adventures with pirates and mutineers in the Spanish Main.

However, at the Court, Captain Phipps had made influential friends. He was admired for his manly qualities ; he was trusted as a man of exceptional integrity. The Duke of Albemarle, with several friends, agreed again to back the doughty Captain for the venture. They secured a new charter for the business from the King ; they found a good staunch ship. Away went Phipps, with a hope so high that nothing could have served to suppress it.

It was when the captain arrived once more at Port de la Plata that Adam Rust and the beef-eaters joined him. The meeting was one in which the demonstration of a great and enduring affection between the two big men was the more affecting because of its utter simplicity and quietness. Adam was welcomed to his share in the new promise with that great spirit of generosity and justice which characterized everything that Phipps was ever known to do.

The preparations for a careful search were pushed ahead rapidly. A small, stout boat was built and launched, near the fatal reef, while the ship was anchored at some distance away, in less treacherous water.

Daily the small boat put forth and the reef was examined, but to no avail. It was found that the shelf of rock, which had broken the old galleon, ended so abruptly as to form a sheer drop of many fathoms, whereas a few feet away it was only a ship's-hold distance from the surface. It was conjectured then that the galleon had struck, had filled with water and so had fallen over the edge of the submerged precipice, where she would lay forever, undisturbed by prodding man.

The search was at length abandoned as being futile. The small boat, being slowly rowed away, Adam beheld a plant, of many colors and rare beauty, growing on the reef below them, in the clear, emerald water. He requested a diver to fetch it up. The boat was halted and overboard went the man. He was soon seen spraddling like some singular creature, back up through the brine. He had fetched the plant and he told of having seen on the bottom the encrusted gun of some sunken vessel.

At Adam's eager command he returned again to the spot and presently arose to the surface with an ingot of silver, slimy and dark, clutched firmly in his hands. The treasure was found !

Putting for the ship at once, where Captain Phipps was somewhat laboriously writing a long report of the second failure, the rover gave the almost incredible news, that set the whole ship afire with amazement and joy.

The entire crew were speedily pressed into service. The work was prosecuted with vigor. Adam looked upon this treasure, coming so late into his sight and life, with a grim smile upon his lips and with scorn in his eyes. He saw the divers fetch up masses of bullion, first, then golden oysters, encrusted with calcareous matter, then broken bags bursting with their largess of Spanish doubloons, and finally precious stones, shimmering, untarnished, in the sunlight.

It was a feverish time. Day after day went by and the boats were filled with fortunes. It seemed as if the more they took, the more they found. The gold on top hid gold underneath.

An old shipmate of Captain Phipps' whose imagination the ship-builder had fired, months before, arrived from Providence. He was able so easily to fill his boat with gold that he went raving crazy and died in a lunatic asylum at Bermuda.

The provisions on the ship began to run low, before the examination of the sunken wreck was complete. Moreover the sailors, their avariciousness aroused by the sight of all these riches, which daily they were snatching from the sea, for other men to enjoy, grew restive and threatened to take a contagion of mutiny.

Treasure to the value of three hundred thousand pounds had been recovered, and much still remained untouched. Phipps determined to sail with what he had, planning to return to the field in the future. He enjoined silence and secrecy on all the sailors, but the word leaked out and adventurers gathering from far and near, the rotting galleon was despoiled of everything she had hoarded so jealously and successfully throughout the years.

Phipps brought his vessel in safety to England. The enormous success which had attended his efforts so aroused the cupidity of certain of the King's retainers that they advised James to confiscate the entire treasure, on the ground that Phipps had withheld such information, on his former return, as would have induced the crown to finance the second enterprise, had the truth been told.

King James, however, was too honorable a monarch to resort to trickery so infamous. Instead he commended the captain in the highest terms, made him an intimate of his court, knighted him Sir William

Phipps and invited him to become an Englishman and reside with them there for the remainder of his life.

Phipps received his honors modestly. He was too patriotic to desert America and bluntly said so to his King. He and Adam received, as their share of the treasure, the one tenth agreed upon, amounting to thirty thousand pounds, of which sum all that the Captain could prevail upon Rust to accept was a third, a sum, the rover said, far in excess of the needs of his retinue and himself.

CHAPTER XLI.

FATE'S DEVIOUS WAYS.

AT Boston it was not a matter of many months before Henry Wainsworth and piety Tootbaker, having been made aware that Garde was no longer provisionally betrothed to Randolph, resumed their former hopes and attentions, as to attending Meeting and paying sundry little visits to the Soams, when Garde could be expected to be seen.

Garde had become a subdued little person, wishing only that she might not be seen by any one as she came and went on her simple rounds of daily life. Her grandfather had recovered so that once more he pothered about in his garden and read in his Bible and busied himself with prattle, more childish than wise.

The old man saw little of his compatriots. He lived as one only partially awake from a recent dread. He never discussed the colony's politics, for his friends, when they came to see him, spared him the ordeal which invariably resulted from a mention of the word charter. On this topic he was quite mad. Almost galvanically, the word produced in his brain a mania, half fear, half fury, in which he seemed to conceive that Garde was the author of woes to which nothing could ever give expression. In such a mood, he was savagery itself, toward the patient girl.

Gradually, so gradually that she could not have said when the impression commenced to grow upon her, Garde discovered that Henry Wainsworth was exceedingly kind, thoughtful and soothing, in her joyless existence. There was something kindred in his own isolation, and in his very bashfulness, or timidity, for it kept him so often silent, when he was with her alone. She had always respected Henry. His patient devotion could not but touch her at length. It was not so much a flattery as it was a faithfulness, through all the discouragements she had given him always.

This line of thought having been awakened in her breast, she noted more of the little, insignificant signs which go to make up the sum of a man's real regard—the regard on which a woman can safely rely as one to endure and to grow.

In the soreness of her heart, it was almost sweet to think of Henry's quiet attentions. It was calming. It lent a little spot of warmth and color to her otherwise cheerless life. She could never love him, as she had loved Adam—nay, as she loved him still,—but the dreariness of her present days might find relief in a new sort of life. Out of the duties, which as a housewife she would experience daily, surely a trust, an esteem for Henry, great enough almost to be called a love, would come, with the years.

She yearned to bury her sorrow. It was not a healthy, wholesome thing for any young woman to foster. She had enjoyed her day of love, yes—her years of love. She had felt like a widowed bride. To her, Adam's kisses had been like the first sacred emblems of their marriage. She had not been able to conceive of permit-

ting such caresses until she should feel that their souls were mated and their hearts already wedded. But it could never be the duty of a woman to mourn such a loss till she died. And then—this newly contemplated union would make her forget.

But, if she could encourage Henry toward this possibility of a union such as she thought upon, it would be her duty to be more cheerful, more living in the every-day hours that were, instead of dreaming sadly and morbidly upon her heart-break of the past.

It was not with a sense of gratifying her own longing for happiness that she finally thought a marriage with Henry possible; there was a sense of combating her own selfishness in it. It was a selfishness, it was pampering the morbid in her nature, she felt, to continue indefinitely in a "widowhood" of Adam's love. It must also be admitted that Garde was human, wherefore the element of pique was not absolutely lacking in her being. No woman would ever wish a man she had rejected to believe that she could not, or would not, marry elsewhere. She would wish to show that other opportunities were not lacking, as well as she would desire to have him know that her heart was not broken beyond repair.

Having spent at least a month upon these introspective and other meditations, Garde appeared to Wainsworth so much more bright and beautiful that there was no containing his emotions. The poor fellow nearly broke his neck, metaphorically speaking, in a vain attempt to ask her to become his wife, on the first occasion afforded, after he made his discovery of her alteration in moods and appearance.

It was of no use to screw up his courage. It would not stick. He determined to write what he could not utter, and then, when a moment should be propitious, to deliver his written declaration into her hand, to be read when he had fled the scene. To this end he composed an elegant and eloquent epistle.

To avoid any possibility of making mistakes, Henry carefully deposited his letter in the pocket of the coat he always wore to Meeting. This pocket had been heretofore employed as a receptacle for things precious over which he desired to exercise particular care.

Having without difficulty obtained permission from Garde to walk at her side to church and back, poor Wainsworth lost appetite and sleep, while waiting for the fateful day. When it came, he was in a nervous plight which revealed to Garde the whole state of his mind. She felt her sympathy for him expand in her bosom till she hoped it would burgeon into love. Had he gone with her into her aunt Gertrude's home, after the service, Garde would doubtless have helped to simplify what she was well aware he wished to say, but, alas for the timid lover, he dared not, on this occasion, so jeopardize his courage.

He knew that if ever he got inside the house and faced her, alone, he would not be able even to deliver his letter. But out of doors his nerve was steadier. Therefore, at the gate having fortified himself against the moment, he nervously drew from his pocket a good-sized packet of paper and put it shakingly into her hand.

"I wish—I wish you would read—this letter," he stammered. "Good-by. I—I hope you will read it quite through."

Garde looked at him compassionately. He was only made the more confused. He bowed himself away with a nervousness painful to see.

"Poor Henry!" said Garde, with a little smile to herself. She knew what to expect in the document and vaguely she wondered if she would not feel more at peace when she had consented to become his wife. Her memory of words and looks, behind which the figure of Adam, the sad boy-captive, the love-irradiated champion of her cat, and then the melancholy violinist in the woods—this had all, of late, been more than usually strong upon her.

Garde's cat had died within the week just passed. This event had served to open up old tombs, containing her dead dreams. She had almost caught herself wishing she had taken less to heart the story of Adam's perfidy, or at least that she might never have heard the story at all. But when she had shaken off the spell which this past would persist in weaving about her, she was resolved to accept Henry Wainsworth, so that her duty might compel her to forget.

With a half melancholy sense of sealing her own sentence of banishment from her land of bitter-sweet memories, she delayed the moment of unfolding Henry's letter. When she found herself alone, she laid it down before her, on the table, and looked at it with lack-luster eyes. But presently, then, having tossed off the reverie which was stealing upon her, she sighed once, heavily, and took up the papers with a resolute hand.

She opened the stiff sheets and bent them straight. She read "Dear friend," and thought Henry's writing had altered. Her eyes then sped along a number of

lines and she started with a new, tense interest in the document.

The letter she held in her hands was the one which Adam Rust had penned to Wainsworth, concerning his brother.

"Why!" she presently said, aloud, "why—he couldn't have meant—" yet Henry, she recalled, had asked her particularly to read all the pages through.

She had only made a start into Adam's narrative, yet her heart had begun to leap till she could barely endure its commotion. She spread the sheets out before her on the table, with nervous fingers. She read swiftly, greedily. Her bosom heaved with the tumult of suddenly stirred emotions. She made a glad little noise, as she read, for the undercurrent of her thought was of a wild exultation to find that Adam was innocent, that she was justified in loving him now, as she had been justified always—that her instinct had guided her rightly when she had helped him to break from the prison.

Her eyes were widely dilated. Her pent-up emotions swayed her till she suddenly clutched up the sheets and crumpled them in joy against her bounding heart.

"Adam!" she said, half aloud. "Oh, Adam! My Adam!"

She bent above the letter again, crooning involuntarily, in the revelation of Adam made again his noble self by the lines he had written so simply and innocently here upon the paper. She was reading, but having, almost in the first few lines discovered so much that her intuition had far out-raced her eyes, she was hardly comprehending the sentences that ran so swiftly be-

neath her gaze, so abandoned were her senses to the sudden hope and the overwhelming joy which the revelation compelled. She kissed the papers. She laid her cheek upon them, she surrounded them warmly with her arms.

She felt so glad that she had loved him in spite of that horrible story ! Her soul leaped with exultation. She would not be obliged to marry Wainsworth, to forget. She would never forget ! She would wait for Adam now—if need be till Judgment Day itself !

She kissed Adam's writing again. She fondled it lovingly. It restored him. It gave her back her right to love him. It was too much to think upon or to try to express.

She had only half read it ; the sense of the story had escaped her grasp. It had been enough that Adam was guiltless. Her breath came fast ; the color had flamed to her cheeks. Her eyes were glowing with the love which she had welcomed home to her throbbing heart.

She had risen, unable to control herself, so abruptly and unexpectedly had the discovery come upon her. Now she sat down again at the table and read the letter more carefully. It was such a sad little story.

"Unfortunately I sprained my ankle, and this delayed me," she read, where Adam had written. She pictured him now, limping through the forest, with the little brown child, and her heart yearned over his suffering, his patience and his self-sacrifice in coming back to the cruel fate in store for him, there in Boston.

She thought of him then in the prison. She blessed the instinct of love which had made her go to his aid.

He was not an outlaw. He was not a renegade. He was her own Adam.

Then she thought of the moment in which she had sent him away. After all the heart-breaking trials he had already endured, she had added the final cruelty. She remembered how he had limped, when she saw him starting off, just before she had fainted at the window, that terrible night. Longing to call him back, now, and to cry out her love,—that had never died,—her trust, which should now endure for ever, and her plea to be forgiven, she fancied she heard him again saying : “ Garde ! Garde !—not forever ? ” and she felt a great sob rising in her throat.

“ Oh, Adam ! ” she said, as if from the depths of her heart.

The hot tears, of joy and sadness blended, suddenly gave vent to the pent-up emotions within her. They rolled swiftly down across her face and splashed in great blots on the writing.

CHAPTER XLII.

LITTLE RUSES, AND WAITING.

WHEN she had recovered somewhat of her calm again, Garde found herself confronted by several difficulties with which she would be obliged to cope. In the first place she had ruined Adam's letter to Henry Wainsworth, crumpling the sheets and permitting her tears to fall upon their surfaces, till no one save herself, aided by love, could have deciphered some of the sentences at all.

In the second place, if Henry had really intended to ask her hand in marriage, as she could not avoid believing, there might be complications in that direction at an early date. She could only resolve, upon this point, that she must not, under any circumstances, permit Henry to make his proposal, either orally or through the medium of another letter.

As to this letter, from Adam to Henry, it was certainly of a private character, but Henry had asked her to read it, and now she could not have disguised the fact that she had done so. She could not see how she could possibly return it to Henry at all, under the circumstances. She could not bear to think of letting him see the evidence of her emotions, wrought upon it. Moreover, it was precious to her. She felt entitled to own it. To her it meant far more than it possibly could to any other

person in the world. She resolved to make a fair copy of it, for Henry, while she herself would retain the original—in Adam's own writing.

Her third proposition was the most vital of them all. She could not think of what she should do to repair the harm which she alone, after all, had done, when she sent Adam away with that little word "Forever!" How should she let him know of the infamous story which she had been made to believe? How should she convince him, even supposing she could reach him with a word, that the story had left no room in her mind for doubt of its truth? How could she manage to persuade him that she had loved him always; that she knew at last of the wrong she had done him; that she begged his forgiveness; that she should wait for him even longer than the fifty years of which he had spoken on that last agonizing night?

He might not forgive her, she told herself. It might be too late already. She knew not where he had gone, or what he had done. He too might have thought of marriage with somebody else—to try to forget.

As a result of her brain cudgeling, to know what she would do to make Adam aware that she had made a great mistake and desired his forgiveness, she determined to write him a letter. Having decided, she wrote at once. Had she waited a little longer, her letter might have been more quiet in its reserve, but it could not then have been so utterly spontaneous, nor expressive of the great love she bore him, kept alive during all those months of doubt and agony.

As it was, the little outburst was sufficiently dignified; and it was sweet, and frank. She told him that she had

read his letter to Henry, and that suddenly she had known of the great wrong she had done him. She mentioned that a dreadful story had been fastened upon him, with all too terrible semblances of truth and justice. She begged his forgiveness in a hundred runes. Finally, when she had finished, she signed it "Garde—John Rosella," in memory of her walk with him through the woods, from near Plymouth to Boston.

Not without blushes and little involuntary thrills of delight did she add the name which confessed the tale of that wonderful walk, but she felt that Adam would know, by this very confession, how deep for him must be her love and trust and how contrite was the spirit in which she desired his forgiveness.

This epistle having at length been disposed of to her satisfaction, she made the fair copy of Adam's letter to Henry and sent it to Wainsworth at once, with a short note of explanation that some moisture having fallen upon the original, making it quite illegible and indeed destroying it utterly, for his use, she felt she could do no less than to make this reparation. She likewise expressed the compliment she felt it was to herself that Henry had desired her to know of this sad affair in the life of his brother, but that she had been so affected by the tale that she must beg him not to permit her to read any further letters for some time to come.

This was a masterly composition, for poor Wainsworth destroyed the proposing epistle he had written at such infinite pains, and for a time wholly abandoned any thought of speaking of marriage. He was exceedingly mortified to think he had made such a blunder as to give her the letter which he had guarded so cautiously.

Timidity settled upon him, especially as he noted another, altogether incomprehensible change in Garde's demeanor, when next they met.

Having despatched her letter to Adam, Garde felt a happiness grow and expand in her bosom daily. She expected the wait to be a long one, till a letter, or some other manner of a reply, could come from Adam. Goodwife Phipps, of whom she had artfully contrived to get the rover's address, had assured her of the very great number of weeks that elapsed between communications from William, in answer to the fond little flock of letters which she was constantly launching forth to the distant island across the sea. But when weeks became months, and time fled onward inexorably, with never a sign or a word in return for what she had written, she had many moments in which sad, vain regrets and confirmed despair took possession of her thoughts.

She was a resigned, patient girl, however, with her impulses curbed, for the sadness of the times, aside from her own little affairs, cast a gloom upon the colony which seemed to deepen rather than to promise ever to dissolve.

Her heart felt that the fifty years had passed many times over her head, when, after a longer time than Mrs. Phipps had mentioned as sufficient to bring even a delayed reply had passed, and nothing had come from Adam Rust. Garde watched for the ships to come, one by one, her hopes rising always as the white sails appeared, and then falling invariably, when no small messenger came to her hand. She lived from ship to ship, and sent her own little argosies of thought traveling wistfully across the seas, hoping they might come

to harbor in Adam's heart at last and so convey to him her yearning to hear just a word, or to see him just once again.

In the meantime, she could not endure the thought that either Henry Wainsworth or Piety Tootbaker should even so much as think of her as if they stood in Adam's place. She therefore went to work with all her maidenly arts, to render such a situation impossible, in the case of either of the would-be suitors.

Thus she contrived to tell the faithful Henry that Prudence Soam was very fond of him indeed. For this she had a ground work of fact. She then conveyed to Prudence the intelligence that Henry was thinking upon her most fondly. This also began soon to be true enough, for Henry had been flattered, not a little, by the news he heard and did look at Prudence with a new and wondering interest. He likewise underwent a process of added intelligence in which he realized that Garde was not for him, howsoever much he might have dreamed, or would be able to dream in the future. It was remarkable, then, how soon the timid Henry and the diffident Prudence began to understand one another. Prudence, who had never had a sweetheart before, blossomed out with pretty little ways and with catching blushes and looks of brightness in her eyes that made her a revelation, not only to Henry but to Garde herself. And Henry became really happy and almost bold.

For Piety, alas, there was no Prudence available. Garde racked her brains for a plan to fit the case of Tootbaker's state of mind. At length, when John Soam began to talk to his wife about the colony pa-

triot again desiring that money which had never been used to send David Donner abroad, for the purpose of sending somebody else, in the spring, Garde knew exactly what to do.

She would manage to send Piety Tootbaker away to England. She went to work in this direction without delay. Her success was not a thing of sudden growth. It took no little time and persuasion to fire Piety with an ambition to serve his country by going so far from his comfortable home and his equally comfortable wooing, in which he believed he was making actual progress.

For their agent extraordinary, to plead their cause at the Court of King James, the colonists selected Increase Mather, a man at once astute, agreeable and afflicted with religious convictions which had every barnacle of superstition that ever lived, attached upon them. Piety Tootbaker was to go as his clerk and secretary.

The preparations for sending Mather abroad were conducted with no small degree of secrecy. Nevertheless Edward Randolph became aware of what was being contemplated, for his hypocritical Puritan agents were everywhere and in all affairs of state, or even of private business.

Permitting the scheme to ripen, Randolph waited until almost the moment for Mather's sailing. He then swooped down upon the enterprise and attempted to arrest Mather, on the process of some sham prosecution. The patriots, incensed almost to the point of rebellion, played cunning for cunning. They delayed the departure of the ship, the captain of which was a staunch

“American,” and then hustled Mather aboard under cover of darkness, and so sent him off on his mission.

For a week after Piety had gone, Garde felt such a sense of relief that she almost persuaded herself she was happy in her long wait for Adam, or for a word which might finally come. But the months again began their dreary procession, and her fear that Adam was lost to her forever deepened and laid its burden more and more upon her heart.

Yet there came a day when, a ship having arrived in the harbor, and her hope having greeted it wistfully, only to flutter back to her own patient bosom again, a letter did actually come to her hand.

It was not particularly neat ; it looked as if it might have been opened before it came to her possession, but her heart bounded wildly when she saw it, and her fingers trembled as she broke it open to read its contents.

Then her joy vanished. The letter was from Piety Tootbaker. He announced, as if to break the intelligence to her frankly, that the voyage had made him so exceedingly ill that he had determined never to trust himself upon the billows again. He would therefore reside hereafter in England, which was “a pleasing countrie and much more merrie than Boston.”

“I shall never, never get an answer to my letter,” said Garde to herself, made sadder by the arrival of Piety’s letter, which proved that letters could actually come from over the sea. “He will never, never reply, I know.”

She was not far mistaken, for Adam had never received her letter. It had fallen into the hands of

Edward Randolph, who had constituted himself censor of communications sent abroad from Massachusetts. Malignantly he was keeping those love-scented sheets, against the day of his vengeance.

PART III.

CHAPTER I.

A TOPIC AT COURT.

IN the midst of a gay throng, in the production of which the Court of King James lagged little, if any, behind that of his brother, Charles, Adam Rust and Captain Phipps were prime favorites. Sir William, who had adopted a cane, gave no promise that he would ever be at home with the disciples of the minuet and the hunt, while Adam seemed a very part of the social mechanism.

Richly dressed, ready with his wit and his sword, handsome, wealthy enough to attract the soft glances of dames of all ages and degrees, he was a puzzle to the blunt captain, who had marked a change that had come upon him between going home from Jamaica and coming back again to help in recovering the treasure.

Whitehall was ablaze with light and warmth, which were reflected from myriad sparkling jewels and from rosy cheeks. The King had disappointed his guests, nevertheless they were not at a loss to find amusement. Ready as ever to entertain, either with a song for the ladies or a duel with the men, Adam was pressed for a

roundel to fit the merry hour. He had found a glass which responded with a particularly musical tinkle to the tap of his finger. He held it up before the admiring company and rang it crisply. Catching the key from its mellifluous tintinnabulation he began his song :

“ Oh your jolliest girl is your cup of sack,
Your Mistress Sack, with her warm, brown eyes ;
She'll love you, and never she'll turn her back,
Nor leave you a thought
In her meshes uncaught,
And never you'll know if she lies.

“ Then it's drink, drink, drink,
And you'll never have need to think ;
And it's fol de rol,
And who has use for a brain ?
With your cup that loves your lip,
You need fear no faithless slip,
And your heart will never know the stabs of pain.

“ Oh your languorous maid is your glass of wine,
Your Lady Amour, with her ruby kiss.
She suffers no rivals, or thinking—in fine,
She owns all your soul
And she takes for her toll
A payment in dull-witted bliss.

“ Then drink, drink, drink, etc.

“ Oh, your mistress for faith is your poison cup,
Your poison cup, with its juice of death.
She'll hold you, ha ! ha ! till the Doomsday's up,
In her passion's embrace,
And so close to her face
That you'll never get time for a breath.

“Then it’s drink, drink, drink,
And you never of love need think ;
And it’s fol de rol,
For who has use for a heart ?
With a cup that loves your lip,
You need fear no faithless slip,
Nor feel the pangs of any pains that dart.”

Not being at all certain that they knew what he meant, the company applauded with great enthusiasm.

“But, my dear sir,” said a nobleman, with a head on him hardly bigger nor less wrinkled than a last winter’s apple, and a stomach as big as a tun, “you have not tasted a drink to-night. Demme, look at me, sir. I love my sack and my wine. I know nothing of your poison cup, and I have no wish to, demme. But, sir, I think you have no bowels for drinking.”

“My lord, you furnish the bowels and I will furnish the brains to know about drinking,” said Adam. “By my faith, no drink ever yet went to your head.”

“No, sir ! I’m proud of it, demme,” said his lordship. “I have drunk up a fortune, and where is it ?—It’s gone.”

“Distill your breath and get it back,” suggested Rust.

“What’s that ? Demme, you are laughing at me, sir.”

“Never !” said Adam, decisively. “Above all persons you make me sober. Breathe toward our friend the Viscount. He has ever wished fortune to wing in his direction.”

“The Viscount ? Where ? Demme, yes. My dear

old chap, how are you ?” and turning, inconsequently, to a friend whose little eyes seemed to swim around in the florid sea of his face, his lordship was deserted by the rover. Sauntering through a cluster of friends who would have detained him, Adam approached a window, where he sat himself down on a miniature divan.

Here he had but a second to himself, for while somebody else was preparing to sing to the company, a beautiful little lady, with eyes that were fairly purple in their depths of blue, came and took the seat beside him.

“Oh, Mr. Rust,” she said, “what a strange song that was. Why, but you know nothing of wine and sack, and poison. Oh, why did you say poison ? That was dreadful. And why should you wish never to think of love ? What has poor little love ever done to you ?”

“You must remember, Lady Violet,” said Adam, “that before I sang I had not seen you, to speak a word, during the entire evening.”

Lady Violet blushed. “That hasn’t anything to do with anything,” she said.

Adam replied : “That makes me equivalent to nothing.”

“It doesn’t,” the lady protested. “You mix me all up. I don’t believe you know anything more about love than you do about drinking.”

“Do you counsel me to learn of these arts ?”

“No, not of drinking—certainly not, Mr. Rust.”

“If we eliminate the drinking, that only leaves the love.”

“Oh, but I—I didn’t say that I—I don’t wish to

counsel you at all. You twist about everything I say."

"And you twist about every man you meet," retorted Adam.

"Oh, I do not!" she objected. "How rude you are to say so. I don't even like all the men I meet, and if I did——"

"You mean, then, that you twist only the ones like myself, that you like."

"I don't! I—— You make me say things I don't want to say."

"Then I shall make you say that you love me desperately," said Adam, complacently.

"Mr. Rust!" she gasped. "I—I—I——"

"If you are going to say it now, let me know," Adam interrupted.

She was blushing furiously. She did love him, just about as Rust had described, but he had never guessed it and was merely toying with the one absorbing and universal topic of the court.

"I—I am not going to say anything of the kind!" she stammered.

"Then that proves my case," Adam announced, judicially. "I cannot compel you to say anything at all that is not already at the point of your tongue."

"You—you are very rude," she said, helplessly.

"So I have been told by Lady Margaret," Adam confessed. "Here she is herself. Lady Margaret, we are having quite a discussion. Tell us, if a man tries to make a lady say she loves him desperately, is he necessarily rude?"

A superb young widow, who was gradually emerging

from her mourning black, and who had come to the gathering with her father, halted in front of the two on the small divan and looked them over.

"Dear Lady Violet," said the new comer, "your brother and Lord Kilkrankie are looking for you everywhere."

"Oh, thank you, so much," said the confused little lady, and without waiting for anything further she jumped up and fled from the scene. She was vexed at and distrustful of Lady Margaret; but she could not remain and give her battle.

The second lady took Violet's seat, calmly. "What have you been saying of love to that little, brainless child?" she said. "You haven't been making love to her, surely?"

"Oh no," said Adam, "I was occupying my time till you should come along and make love to me."

"You wretch," she said, with perfect calm. "You wouldn't know love if you saw it."

"Is it so rare at Court?" he inquired. "Perhaps I should spend my time better in looking at you."

"Don't be silly," she said. "But tell me, what is your opinion, really, of love?"

"It makes a poor fare for dinner, a poor coat in the winter, and a poor comfort when you are dead," said Rust. "It tricks the clever; it's the wandering Jew of emotions. If you wish me to do you an injury, bid me to love you forthwith."

"Where have you learned, that you speak with such wisdom?" said Lady Margaret. "Surely not such a child as Violet——"

"You do yourself an injustice," Adam interrupted.

"Adam," she said, "this is the sort of thing you say to all the women."

"And which of your friends would you ask me to neglect?" he asked. "A woman's judgment is the one thing I lack."

"You are a heartless wretch!" she announced.

"On the contrary, I am a wretch of a thousand hearts," he corrected. "How long would you continue to love me if I had any less?"

"Adam! I don't love you, and you know it."

"That leaves a vacancy in my life which I shall fill at once," he told her. "Wait—perhaps I can catch the eye of the Countess."

The Countess had one of the most catchable eyes imaginable. She came up immediately.

"Margaret says she no longer loves me," said the incorrigible Rust, "I shall give her place to you."

CHAPTER II.

ILLNESS IN THE FAMILY.

SICK of the women, to all of whom he made love, openly, to avoid being thought serious by any ; weary of the specious show, which failed to bring him the forgetfulness he craved, Adam left the assemblage early and went to search out the beef-eaters, at their humble quarters.

Improvidents that they were, Pike and Halberd had soon dispersed the not inconsiderable sum of money which Adam had divided between them, since which time he had provided the pair with their lodgings, keep, clothing and amusements.

The night being fine and the air soon reviving the rover's livelier moods of delight in sheer existence, he found himself loitering along, stopping to look in the windows of the scattered shops still open for the tag-ends of the day's trading. It was only the little knick-knack shops, old curio dens and lesser establishments that still had their lights aglow, but it happened that these were the particular ones in which Adam took an interest.

He stopped before one of the dingiest for fifteen minutes, carefully scanning a considerable collection of violins which the window contained. At length his eye lighted, he muttered something half exclamatory

and went into the shop at once. The dealer knew him and nodded delightedly, glad to have him again in his place, as he had fully expected when he placed the rare old fiddle which Rust had seen, in his window.

Adam bought the instrument with all the eagerness of the confirmed connoisseur and went his way contented.

When he came to the tavern where the beef-eaters made their abode, he found little Pike dangerously ill with pleurisy and thinking of shuffling off forlornly into his next existence.

The one thing which alone could transform Adam Rust into the cheerful fellow he had been before his veneer of cynicism came upon him, was illness in his family. He refused to let his beef-eaters think of dying. They were his tie to everything he still held dear.

He pulled off his coat and went to work on Pike, whose spirits he raised with songs, raillery and cheer, and whose fever he lowered with teas and bitter drinks, which he steeped himself, from various herbs and roots, the specific qualities of which he had known from the Indians.

The Court saw no more of the reckless Adam for a week. At the end of this time he had coaxed the faithful Pike to something like his former health again, when he announced his intention of going to Spain, to add to his growing collection of violins. He therefore said good-by to Sir William Phipps and went off with his beef-eaters both in charge.

Having learned that the Pyrenees afforded splendid possibilities for building up depleted health and strength, the rover domiciled himself and companions

in a spot that was charmingly lonely. And William Phipps, when Adam's first letter arrived, wondered vaguely what manner of violins his comrade was finding in the mountains.

CHAPTER III.

FOILED PURPOSES.

INCREASE MATHER met with a dignified and polite reception at the Court of the King, for Sir William Phipps, with all his influence and persuasiveness, prepared the way for the envoy extraordinary to approach the master of the colonies.

Sir William even constituted himself another champion of downtrodden Massachusetts, and added his importunities to those of Mather, to induce James to re-establish the rights and territory of the colony and to give it back its beloved charter.

"We love you much, Sir William," said the King, with a firmness which was never to be shaken, "but we cannot accede to your wishes. Anything but this that you will ask shall be granted."

Disappointed, but never disconcerted, Sir William conferred with Mather, whom he was obliged to assure that nothing that either of them could say to him now would beget an alteration of King James's decision. Mather, persistent, suave and convinced of the justice of his cause, determined to remain in touch with the Court and the King's retainers, until sheer patience and persistence should win what persuasion could not.

Phipps, knowing only too well the disposition of the King, when once his word was passed, determined that

he could do more for his country if present in the colony than he could by remaining in London. Reminding the King that he had already granted him any other favor than the restoration of the colony's charter, he announced his desire to be appointed Sheriff of New England.

Regretting to lose the hearty Captain from his company, James nevertheless kept his word by complying with Sir William's request. The appointment was duly made and confirmed. Leaving Mather behind him, Phipps returned to Boston and set about the administration of his new-made duties, with more ardor than cunning, with more honesty than diplomacy.

It is doubtful if William Phipps ever had a more aggravating experience, in all his adventures, with mutineers and pirates, than he underwent at the hands of Randolph and Governor Andros. He was not a man of finished education. Born in Maine, in a family of twenty-one children, he had been obliged to commence the round of shifting for himself at an early age. He had apprenticed himself to a ship-carpenter at eighteen and then had come to Boston four years later, when he went to work and taught himself to read and to write.

Hampèred now, by this lack of early opportunities, insulted, and finding his most sincere efforts nullified and his plans constantly frustrated, by the delays and artifices of the council under Andros, he was made heartily sick of the whole situation.

His return to Boston, however, was not marked entirely by chagrin and discouragement. He had his wife with him, and herein lay the greatest happiness which ever came into his eventful life. He built her

the "fair brick house, in the Green Lane," which he had promised, years before, and he endeared many of the staunch patriots, who beheld his efforts to help them, sadly, though with admiration.

Although Garde had never known how very intimate indeed had been the relations of Captain Phipps and Adam, yet she was aware that they had been much together. She had naturally learned, in common with all the inhabitants of Boston, that Sir William had found the treasure he had spent so many years in seeking, but she had never known that when she sent Adam away he had gone to Hispaniola to join the searching expedition. Therefore she was in ignorance of the fact that Adam was wealthy.

But, after all, she was only concerned with Adam's present whereabouts, and the reasons why, after all these months and months of waiting—it being now two full years since that last tragic meeting—he had never relented sufficiently to write, or to send her a word.

As time had gone on, she had become more and more convinced, either that Adam intended never to forgive her, or that he had married some one else and therefore could not, in honor, think longer upon her. Her belief inclined toward the first explanation. She confessed that she had done him a great wrong, especially as she had never even so much as permitted him to deny the story of the Indian child, but she argued that had she been in his place and forgiveness had been so earnestly implored, she could not have had the heart to refuse.

It was the one little sad privilege left her, to make up her mind she would wait, till death, if need be,

patiently, lovingly, till Adam should one day know she loved him and that she was keeping herself sacred for his claiming. And if he never did come to claim her, still she would love him. If death came to take her, she would go to death as a bride would go to church, to wait the coming of her love.

In the frame of mind which her vigil had begotten, fortified by her sense of maidenly pride and diffidence, it was utterly impossible for her to think of going either to Sir William Phipps, or to his wife, to ask for information concerning Adam. She was aware that the Captain doubtless knew of Adam's whereabouts, his position in life and whether or not he was married, but if Adam chose to remain silent, disdainful and unforgiving, she would rather die than go to a stranger to ask about him, or to send him anything further, in the way of a word or a letter.

As a matter of fact, Garde had attempted to send another little letter, a year after the first one had gone, but it too had fallen into the clutches of Randolph. The creature had destroyed it, as containing nothing of importance to any of his machinations, for it merely asked the rover if he had received the first epistle.

Thus Garde's golden opportunity slipped away unused, and her life narrowed down, more and more, to the simple duties of taking what care she could of the white-haired old man, her grandfather, who rubbed his thumb across the ends of his fingers endlessly, although he was slowly being restored to his old-time activity of mind and body.

Utterly disheartened, by the futility of his desires and efforts to serve his country in his capacity of

Sheriff, Sir William Phipps was glad to receive a letter that came from Increase Mather, informing him that the time was drawing near for renewed labors to be attempted in England. Responding to this, he deserted his useless office and sailed for London in the midst of the winter season.

The opportunity of which Garde might have availed herself, to learn something of Adam, was gone. She knew not what she had done, or what she had lost.

Phipps came to England at a moment when epochs were fairly in the process of crystalization.

King James, the last of Britain's Roman Catholic monarchs, had been obliged to abdicate his throne and to flee to Ireland for his life.

CHAPTER IV.

MAKING HISTORY.

UNTHRONE*D* and uncrowned as he was, James, for some inexplicable reason, still entertained a wild idea that the colonies, the patriots of which he had taken no pains to endear to his cause or himself, would still remain loyal and contented to acquiesce in his dominion. He made all haste to communicate with Sir William Phipps, as a representative of New England whom he had always honored and esteemed. He offered to appoint the Captain his Governor of all New England, with plenary powers, in almost any direction, concerning the old charter and all.

Promptly and with the blunt wisdom which marked his course through life, Phipps refused the honor. Catholicism had never appealed to his sense of good government, and loyalty to the English throne, from which the colonies had their being, was deeply ingrained in his nature. Gratitude to James for past favors, to which he felt he was somewhat entitled, was a large quality in Sir William, but between gratitude and folly he drew a sturdy line.

With Increase Mather, Phipps went to work at once at the Court of William of Orange, who with Mary ascended the British throne early in 1689. Intelligence as to the sinister machinations of Randolph and Andros

leaked through the censorship, and came to Mather and the Captain. Their case was strengthened. The Prince of Orange was bound, by all the faith of his Protestant principles, to grant what release he might to the American colonies from the oppressors placed in power by the Stuarts.

The new King's declaration of his sway was conveyed in haste to the American shores. It was taken overland from Virginia to Massachusetts. The spirit of the Puritans, which had simmered so long, began to make the sounds of boiling.

Andros, mighty in his sovereignty, arrested the messenger who had fetched the news, but the news had leaped from lip to lip, and the torch had been applied to combustible thought.

In March, John Winslow confirmed the declaration of the new monarchs. The people now gathered together their all-but-forgotten muskets and pikes. Against the flood-tide coming toward him, Governor Andros reared a barricade of threats. The frigate "Rose" was lying in the harbor, bristling with guns that showed like so many sinister, black fangs. Her decks were alive with soldiers. The Governor demanded the submission and disarmament of the people, on pain of death. He declared his intention of employing the cannon and arsenal of the frigate forthwith, if the angry disturbances did not immediately cease.

On the 18th of April the patriots were prepared with their answer. The captain of the frigate, with nearly all of his officers, had come ashore, to hold a conference with Andros and Randolph. The Puritans suddenly swooped down upon them and captured every

Jack of the lot. The frigate was thus put out of action at one clever stroke.

Now rolled the alarm of beaten drums through the martial city of Boston. In their old Indian-fighting regalia, the citizens swarmed from their houses into the streets. They set up their ensign on Beacon Hill, at the edge of the Common, they fired a signal gun for action, and falling upon Randolph and many of the council, which Andros had collected about him, they rushed them to jail and took possession of the town.

The proclamation of King William was read, with loud acclaim. The excited populace surged in the narrow, crooked highways. The leaders demanded of Andros that he surrender both his office and himself. The man refused and fled to his stronghold, whence he defied the patriots and continued to the last to declare his power, though like water now fast escaping from his grasp.

Surrounding their ex-master they made him a prisoner, not a refugee, and at length he gave in and was captured and sent to confinement, along with the others of his recent government.

With an instinct for conventions, the citizens were soon assembled. Howsoever great had been their heat in their moment of rebellion and triumph, they were calm enough to be wise when the time arrived to declare for themselves. They reinstated Bradstreet and the Council of '86. They declared the old Government in force and their former charter *ipso facto* restored, unimpaired by the interim of nearly three years of maladministration.

William and Mary received the report of all these

swiftly terminated proceedings with a favor which was not unblended with astonishment. Admiring the Protestant spirit, which it had become their own special province to uphold, they lost no time in confirming the entire course of actions, even to the temporary resumption of their old charter privileges and powers, by the patriots across the sea. And there, for a time, they were contented to permit the matter to rest. The affairs of England they had found so completely engrossing that they had no time to spare to ward regranteeing a specific charter to Massachusetts.

Increase Mather, suspicious of privileges and liberties not absolutely signed, sealed and delivered, remained at his post, working continuously and sedulously to obtain that monarchical support and confirmation of the colony's prerogatives which his many compatriots had sent him to secure.

Sir William Phipps, on the other hand, realized the busy state of mind in which William and Mary had been so abruptly plunged, and he therefore deferred further work with Mather for a time more suitable. Then, when he learned that the French Catholics in America had formed alliances with the Indians and were already overrunning the Protestant territory and committing daily depredations, he made up his mind once more to return to the field of action, in which he might be able to render more effective service than he could by remaining in England.

He arrived in the summer of that fateful year, '89, and offered himself to Bradstreet at once. The period of warfare in which he thereupon engaged was one of great length and of much bitterness.

Alternating defeat and victory left the advantages with the French and Indians, so far as hopes of ultimate success were concerned. The colonists had to make such long, tedious marches that decisive victories for their arms were almost impossible. The enemy gained in confidence, audacity and numbers.

In despair the General Court finally offered two sloops of war, free, together with all the profits of plunder which might result from the enterprise, to any man who would undertake to reduce to ashes Penobscot, St. John's and Port Royal, the seats of the French and Indian power. The offer attracted Phipps, who foresaw, in the execution of the task, an infinite amount of adventure and action.

He enlisted men for the undertaking. Yet matters grew worse with such alarming rapidity that before the enterprise could be placed in readiness for work, it became necessary to raise a small fleet of vessels prepared for war-like operations. Thus seven sloops and seven hundred men, under command of Sir William, sailed away to the North on their sinister errand.

Port Royal, secure and arrogant, in her fancied isolation from attack, was surprised and taken. The French were routed with great loss. The town was looted until hardly so much as a sauce-pan was left by the thorough-going warriors of New England. The plunder, while not enormously valuable, nevertheless was sufficient to help materially in meeting the expenses of the venture. But its indirect effect on the colonists was not so happy. Cupidity is so often the jackal that follows righteous indignation.

The Puritans foresaw opportunities to punish the

enemy, at the enemy's own expense. A second expedition, to go against Quebec, was planned, the patriots expecting in confidence that, like the first, it would surely succeed, if Phipps were at its head, and that the plunder would more than repay the initial expenses of the expedition.

Sir William, having expressed his doubts of the wisdom of this over-ambitious scheme, nevertheless commanded the fleet once more as it sailed away, eager for further conquest.

The enterprise was doomed to failure from the first. It dragged out interminably, it developed jealousies, it was ill-planned. Such a bedraggled, failure-smitten lot of lame-duck sloops returned to Boston that the council were simply appalled. They had expended so much of their meager hoard of funds on the venture, that the treasury was practically bankrupted.

Blame rained upon the head of Phipps, for not having succeeded against impossible conditions. Driven to extremities, by the woeful lack of plunder, the colony-fathers were obliged, for the first time in their history, to issue paper currency. The notes ranged in value from denominations of two shillings up to ten pounds.

Still an undimmed patriot, ready to serve his country in whatsoever direction an opportunity was afforded, Williams Phipps gave his gold for the colony's bills, absorbing thus a very considerable sum. His example induced investments in the paper from all directions. Nevertheless the currency soon came tumbling down in value, till a pound in paper was worth less than three-fourths of its face.

The sailors, and other working people, lost heavily, in these times of trouble and weakened confidence. Yet eventually the money was all redeemed at par by the Massachusetts government.

Sir William, weary of being reviled for his pains, returned to England once again and resumed his labors with Increase Mather, to secure to the colony a definite charter.

CHAPTER V.

OLD ACQUAINTANCES.

ADAM RUST failed, even in the intricacies of collecting violins and the pursuit of health for the old beef-eaters, to find the depths of forgetfulness he sought, but which could not come to a nature such as his had always been. Indeed seclusion, away from the gaiety of Court and his fellow-beings seemed rather to develop the old, half-forgotten memories in his brain, whereon had once been shadowed the sufferings of King Philip, his Indian foster-father, and all his race of hunted people.

The beef-eaters, also, were not absolutely contented, away from their own country and the haunts wherein they were wont to brag, to drink and to swagger. Yielding at last to their importunities, Adam returned with the pair to London.

Once in the foggy capital again, he was soon pounced upon, by old associates, with whom he found it exhilarating once again to consort. A treatise on rare violins and their makers, over which he had labored and pondered for months, or even years, was now neglected.

He sharpened his wits, had a look at his sword and brightened up his disused tinsel of conversation. He soon began to believe the greatest forgetfulness, after all, is where the Babel of tongues is loudest, and that

the most absolute solitude is to be found in the midst of the largest throng.

The social functions of the new King were fewer, less brilliant and not to be compared, in point of popularity, with those of James. The Dukes, the Marchionesses and lesser lights weretherefore constrained to make the more of their private parties. There was, in consequence, no stint of hunting, drinking and dancing—all as condiments poured about the omniprevalent piece de resistance—making love.

At the Duchess of Kindlen's, Adam found the set he had known particularly well. He was welcomed back to their circle as a long-lost fixture without whose presence no one was at all able to explain how they had managed to go on existing. They fitted him back in his niche with a promptness which might have been flattering, had he not been aware that they wished merely to feed upon him as a new entertainer, or an old one refurbished.

He was not surprised to learn that Lady Violet had been married in his absence. He was duly informed of this event, which he described as an irreparable calamity in his life, by Lady Margaret, who was more of a brilliant blossom of feminine charm and enticements than ever before.

"But you, my dear Lady Margaret," he said, "you have been true to my memory? You have never learned to love another?"

"I never learned to love you, Adam," she said.

"Then it must have been a matter of spontaneous combustion," he concluded. "You always did manage your compliments adroitly."

"Confirmed villain," she answered, "a woman would

be mad who loved such a bubble of flattering reflections as you have always been."

"I was not accusing you of sanity," he told her frankly. "I was merely inquiring whether or not you have learned to love somebody else, in my absence."

"And if I had, what then?"

"I should wish to pause for reflection, before determining whether I should be more sorry for the other fellow or for myself."

"Fiend!" she said, mildly, "you shall never know."

"Know what?—know where to place my sympathy?"

"You shall never know whether I have learned to love another, or not."

"Well, neither will you—that one's consolation."

"But at least I shall know how I feel toward you, Adam Rust."

"So shall I," said the cheerful Adam. "I have always known. If you should say you were dying, I should know you were dying to run away with me, forthwith. It's not your fault, you can't help it."

"I never dreamed of such a thing in my life!" she said.

"Then you ought at once to consult a physician for a bad case of insomnia. I thought your eyes looked a bit weary."

"You vile thing!" she answered. "Ted never said such a thing as that in his life."

"Then you have been trying to learn to love Ted? I thought you had a faithless look about you—all except about your eyes. Alas, from the way you talk I know you must be married already to this Ted."

"I'm not!" she said, unguardedly. "I refused only to-night to set the day."

"This was a thoughtfulness toward me I had not expected," said Rust, complacently. "But you are betrothed, and this was unkind."

"Unkind to whom?" she demanded.

"To Ted—and to me."

"You will like Ted," she told him, more artfully.

"At the other end of a duel, yes—immensely."

"He's a terrible swordsman," she said, to urge him on.

"Yet how poorly he fenced with you."

"What do you mean?"

"You won. You got him—poor devil."

"Wretch! Ted at least would never pick on a woman."

"If it's Ted Suffle," said Rust, "I saw him pick on his teeth, to-night, and that is worse—in company."

"His tooth aches terribly!" said Lady Margaret, defending poor Suffle gallantly.

"He indulges in too much sweets," Adam remarked, unmoved. "Treat him the way you do me and he'll soon be better."

"I wish Ted could hear the way you talk to me," she said.

"If he could hear the things you say to me, he would demand that duel quicker," Rust responded. "Tell me something outrageous to say to the fellow, so that he will be obliged to challenge."

"Nonsense," she said, looking at him slyly, "don't be silly. You wouldn't fight a duel over me."

"Ah, but think what a lot of ladies would think me

a hero," he replied with enthusiasm. "And I might also be banished from the country. You can never tell where luck and lightning will strike next."

"Go away, Adam," she said. "You are perfectly monstrous."

"I'll go and have a look at Ted," he answered, calmly. "If he is a gentleman he will probably insult me without delay."

To Lady Margaret's utter dismay and astonishment, he sauntered off at once and actually went to where Suffie was standing, and had himself presented.

"I have asked for this honor," he said, "the sooner to offer my best congratulations on your betrothal. Lady Margaret has told me a little about it. She is the happiest girl I have ever seen in all my life."

"You are a good chap to say so," said Suffie. "Do you know, I fancied I should like you, Mr. Rust, the moment I saw you."

"I should like to give you my friendship as a wedding present," Adam told him, honestly, knowing at once that Suffie was a fellow he could really somewhat like. Then he added, more equivocally: "I have known Lady Margaret so long that I shall take great happiness in seeing the consummation of this happy event."

CHAPTER VI.

JUGGLING WITH FIRE.

LADY MARGARET was a beautiful woman. The next time he met her, Adam realized that this was true. He stood looking down upon her, where she sat on a low divan which was made to throw two persons very close together, and into which he had avoided squeezing. The young woman looked up at him winningly, a slumberous passion in her garnet-brown eyes. Her creamy white bosom rose and fell in a calm voluptuousness, the twin beauties of which were more than suggested.

Rust could not recall that he had ever seen shoulders more superb, nor a throat more delightfully round and built upward in curves to the perfect chin at the top. In contrast with her lustrously dark eyes and her almost black eyebrows, spanning her forehead with their dainty arches, her old-gold hair was an amazing crown of loveliness.

She had led him away from the company, "to look for Ted," with an art which had for once deceived the crafty rover completely. Now, as he looked upon her, assuming a coldness it was utterly impossible to feel, and be a man, he noted a beauty in her bare arms which made him think of the perfect lines of a tiger's paw. He could have suggested nothing to make them more splendid.

Indeed she was well-nigh matchless as a creation of nature and polite society. Her shimmering satin gown clung to her form as if ardently. Her pretty gold-slippered feet and her slender ankles, in red silk, open-work stockings, defied a glance to ignore them.

"Adam," she said, smiling up at him archly, "I wish you were a girl—just for a few moments, you know."

"You would suffer by the contrast between us," said Rust.

"You would know what a—what a bore he is," she went on, regardless of his comment. "And it would serve you right."

"You doubtless mean the King," he replied. "Your expedients are cruel. Make anything out of me—a camel, if you like,—but not a girl."

"I mean Ted," she said, a little desperately. "You know I mean Ted. You know what a bore he is."

"Then you have spoiled him since morning."

"You have no right to be the only man who isn't a bore," she went on.

"You'll be telling me I am the only man you ever loved, in a moment," he answered. "I can feel it coming."

"And if I did," she said with a passionate glance, "what then?"

Adam was frightened, as he had never been before in his life. He took out his handkerchief and flecked a bit of dust from his boot, nonchalantly.

"I should advise you to be bled for fever," he said. "And I should know the old affection you had

for me once had departed forever. "Couldn't you break my heart in some simpler way, dear Lady Margaret?"

"It was all your fault for going away," she told him. "You knew I liked you before you went away."

"Oh yes," he responded gaily, "but I saw that your passionate love for me was waning, so I went away to kindle it over again."

"Do be serious for a moment," she murmured, vexed with his calmness and his raillery. "You know Ted is a dreadful bore."

"Then since you have given him the love that once was mine, my cue is to become a bore instantler."

"You would never know it, if I loved you madly," she said, looking up into his face with her declaration centered in her eyes."

"Yes, I would," he corrected, placidly. "If you loved me madly you would tell me about it; you know you would."

Her breath came fast. Her bosom rose and fell rapidly. "You wouldn't believe me if I did," she said.

"If you told me you loved me madly," said Adam, "I should know you didn't. So please let me go on with my fond delusions."

She was silent a moment. He could feel her burning gaze on his face. "Adam," she said presently, "do sit down." She moved to make half room enough for him on the divan.

"What, and make you stand?" he replied. "Never!"

She placed her hand on the arm of the seat, where she knew his fingers would return when he had finished

scratching at a tiny white speck on his coat-lappel. He observed her motion and thrust his fist in his pocket.

"Oh, I am dying," she presently whispered, after another silence.

"How interesting," Adam cheerfully commented. "What are you dying for, a glass of water, or a new set of diamonds?"

"You know what I am dying for," she said, tremulously, in a voice hardly above a whisper. "You said if I were dying, you—you would know what for."

"Oh, did I?" Adam mused. He was pale behind his calm. His hands were perspiring, coldly. "Yes, of course. I said you would be dying to run away with me. And now you would try to prove that this was all wrong. My dear Lady Margaret, this is unkind."

She arose from her seat. She was driven to her wits' end for anything to say.

"Silly boy," she answered, as she came toward him, and then she quickly added: "Oh, Adam, would you mind just clasping this strap?"

The strap was a narrow bit of finery which crossed her bare shoulder. She had artfully loosened the golden clasp and now came to present shoulder, strap, clasp and all for re-arrangement.

"There is nothing I can do with greater ease," said Rust, "There you are,—done already." He had performed his office with amazing dexterity and with a touch so fleeting that she would never have known when it alighted.

"Oh, you haven't done it right, my dear foolish

Adam," she said, with a delicious little chuckle. "I'll put my arm across your shoulder, so. Now, make it right, do, Adam, please."

She dropped her exquisite arm on his shoulder as she spoke and edged closer. She turned so that her face was so near to his that he could feel how glowing warm she was. Her breath fanned against his cheek, hotly. The man felt a sense of intoxication stealing upon him. Yet he was fixing the clasp as briefly as before, when she made a movement with her slipper.

"Oh, I am falling," she said in a little cry, and throwing both arms about him, to support herself, she was clasped close to his breast, for a moment, before he could seem to re-establish her balance. In that brief time a mad horde of thoughts ran riotously through his brain. She was beautiful; she loved him; she had fascinated something in him always. Could he not be happy, loving her and having her love in return? Why not run away with her—to the Continent—anywhere—and fill the aching void in his nature with love and caresses!

His heart was beating furiously. He trembled. A fever leaped into his brain. Through his arms shot a galvanic contraction, as they halted in the act of closing about the superb, slender figure he was holding. It seemed as if he must kiss her, on her lips, her throat—her shoulder!

"Adam, I am dying!" she whispered to him again, as he held her.

"Don't die standing up," he said, with a sudden recovery of the mastery over himself. "Sit down and do it calmly."

He swayed her aside, and there was nothing she could do but to take the seat she had occupied before.

“How provoking of me to trip on my gown,” she said, looking up at him sullenly. “Do you think we shall have snow to-morrow?”

“I shall pray against a precipitation of icebergs,” said Adam. “There is nothing suggestive of love in ice.”

CHAPTER VII.

A BEEF-EATER PASSES.

THE rigors of the London winter pursued the beef-eaters relentlessly, tapping them remindfully on the shoulder, now and again, with a cold, or a spell of bronchitis, and then, under cover of a fog, some deadly affliction fastened upon the pair all at once. The rover found them, after an absence from their quarters of two days, so ill that first one and then the other was crawling from his bed to minister to his comrade, so that both grew rapidly worse.

Adam looked at the two of them ruefully, when at length he came to where they were. He had never known them ill in this manner before. They cared nothing for eating; they slept but little. Their eyes were bright. They were perfectly cheerful, in a feeble sort of way. After the Sachem had come they declared they wanted for nothing, provided he would talk to them, sing a little and let them lie there and see him, or hear him play on his favorite violin.

He brought them every comfort which money could buy. He cooked for them, served them and ate at their board—which was a board indeed, reaching from one bed to the other, where they could easily get at what he spread on its surface for their pleasure. But the choice wines he fetched, and the fruits and the delicate bits of game and fish, remained almost wholly untasted.

Adam was soon at a loss to know what to do. He tried to get at their symptoms.

"Pike, you rogue," he said, "I want to know where you feel bad. You are ill, you know ; now where is the pain ?"

"By my sword-stroke," said Pike, in a worn-down voice, "I have no pain. I may be tired, to-day, but to-morrow, bring me a pirate and I shall eat him without the trouble of slicing him first."

"Tired, that's it," agreed Halberd. "I'm a bit tired myself, this afternoon, but by cock's crow to-morrow I could enjoy pulling the tail out of a lion and beating the beast to death with the bloody end of it."

"Well, doesn't your stomach ache, or your head hurt you ?" insisted Adam. "When you cough like that, doesn't it hurt your chest ?"

"No, I like it, for the tickling," said Halberd.

The two old scamps were afraid of being taken across the channel to Spain again, or down into France, or perhaps across to Morocco. After three days of his "tinkering" unsuccessfully, with his faithful companions, Adam called in a doctor.

The worthy physician promptly bled the two patients. Little Pike became quieter, if possible, than before. Halberd, on the contrary, was somewhat wrought up in his feelings.

"By my steel !" said he, when the doctor had departed, "this puny Sir Nostrum has let more of my juice with his nonsense than ever was taken by swordsmen out of my carcass. Faith ! I'll pulp the fellow, and he comes again !"

Adam laughed, for Halberd suddenly got back a

monstrous appetite. He likewise abounded in pains, which he permitted the Sachem to soothe; and he otherwise improved past all belief. He had been a little ill, and his sympathy with Pike had made his ailment mischievous.

Pike, however, had no such rally in him. He put in his time smoothing the coverlet with slow, feeble movements, while he lay there looking at Adam with dumb affection until one could almost fancy he was wagging a tail, with weak, joyful jerks.

He got the Sachem to sing him the love song of the many seas, for Pike had once had a heart full of love for a maiden himself, and while the experience was nothing jollier than a funeral on the day set for the wedding, nevertheless he liked the lively song, with all its various maids and misses mentioned, for he conceived them all to be the self-same girl, after all, simply transported to different climes.

While Adam was singing and playing, with the merriest spirit he could conjure, the wistful old Pike had the impudence to close his eyes and die.

A faint smile lingered on his face; whether as a result of his joke on Adam and Halberd, or his pleasure derived from the song, could never be known.

CHAPTER VIII.

A WOMAN SCORNE.

SIR WILLIAM PHIPPS and Increase Mather, together with the other Puritan partits who made up the small band of charter-hunters at the Court of William and Mary, worked consistently, if not harmoniously, toward their end.

They found their monarch disposed to permit them to do about as they pleased, when at length he comprehended their situation and the needs of Massachusetts. His attorney-general was ordered to draw up a charter, on the broad lines suggested by the American council. No sooner did they get it into their hands, however, than they fell into heated discussions over trifling divergencies which they found between it and the older charter, which they had come to regard with almost idolatrous awe and reverence.

The new charter granted them many liberties and privileges which the old one had not contained. Time even proved the new one to be the better document for the colony, but despite these facts, and the further fact that it restored to their dominion the provinces of Maine, New Hampshire, and Nova Scotia, to the St. Lawrence River, they found much at which to grumble.

However, they finally accepted what they had, with what show of gratitude they were able to simulate.

Their disaffection doubtless had its purpose, and it might have been fruitful of the further concession which they gained, namely, the privilege of nominating their own next Governor.

Here, for once, they were quite unanimous. They requested that Sir William Phipps be appointed. They knew that without the priceless services which he had rendered the cause, during all his sojourn in England, they might never have received a tithe of what was now secured to their country with all possible stability.

The nomination of Captain Phipps was made complete by the King without delay. He was constituted Captain-General and Governor-in-Chief of the Province of Massachusetts Bay, in New England, and likewise Captain-General of the Colonies of Connecticut and Rhode Island.

Weighted down with these new responsibilities, he went seeking for Adam Rust, at the gay salon of the Duchess of Kindlen, noted in its day for its scope and the liberties acceded to the guests who assembled in its spacious halls.

Having heard from a mutual friend that Sir William would be looking him up at the Duchess', Adam repaired to the scene rather more early than was his custom. He had seen but little of the captain for a matter of several years. He was chiding himself upon the negligence by which this had been made possible, when he arrived at the house.

The funeral of the faithful Pike, and the plight of the lorn old Halberd, since losing his comrade, had depressed Adam's spirits immeasurably. Halberd had

been following him about, dumbly, ever since the dire event in the family. He said but little ; he made no complaints of his loneliness. He simply hung on Adam's footsteps, like a homeless old dog, whose one remaining instinct is faithfulness and undying affection, waiting for his master when he came from the brightly-lighted houses, pleased and excited whenever he could have the Sachem to talk with on the topic of Pike's many virtues and traits of character that confirmed him in his fellow's affections.

Adam had taken the lorn beef-eater into his own apartments, where he could keep a more careful watch over his health and his negative happiness. No friend among all his noble acquaintances had such a hold on Adam's heart as had this bragging old remnant of his retinue, and to none did he drop the mask of frivolity as he did before this companion, whom nothing could discourage nor alter.

Thus he had been glad to think of going no more where the Duchess, Lady Margaret and the others assembled, with their tinsel show, their thinly-plated talk, their gambling and amours, but had contemplated going away with Halberd, into Nature's simpler walks and profounder beauties.

The garish glitter struck inharmoniously upon him, as he walked impatiently through the brilliant rooms, in a search for Sir William Phipps, who had not yet arrived. He presently found himself confronted by Suffle, who, in turn, had been looking about for Lady Margaret.

"How do you do?" said Suffle, at once. "My dear Rust, I am charmed to see you again. I have been

wanting to see you, 'pon my word. Would you mind just giving me a few minutes' talk?"

"One of my greatest delights is derived from listening to a brilliant conversationalist," said Rust. "Where shall we go?"

"There is no one as yet in the dice-box," said the other. "If you don't mind, we might stroll in there by ourselves."

Saying, "I am yours to command," Adam followed leisurely behind his friend to the now empty room employed nightly for gambling.

"It's rather a delicate business—what I have to say," confessed Suffle, by way of a preface, "but you are a frank, decent fellow, that a man can talk to, well—openly—don't you know."

"Thanks," said Adam. "If it is anything about Lady Margaret, let us be sensible, by all means."

"That's devilish clever of you, old chap," responded Suffle, evidently much relieved already. "Of course you know how matters stand."

"I would never be sure of where anything stood, that had a woman for an element in its make-up."

"Yes, I know. That's clever, too—deucedly clever. Perhaps I had better put it plainly."

"Do, I beg of you."

"Now—you are a frank, sensible man. Now—do you really like—you know—love, you know—Lady Margaret,—just speaking as man to man, sensibly, as you so cleverly said?"

"Would you force me to become either ungallant or a traitor?"

"Not at all, I——"

"Well, let us say that I am ungallant, since we are to be frank," said Rust. "I will even admit that I am ungallant."

"Good," said Suffle. "That's what I thought—I mean, you know——"

"Yes, I know what you mean. Proceed."

"Well, I feel very much relieved. You are a decent sort, Rust—a deucedly decent sort. Now I am very fond of Lady Margaret. I have learned to be, you know. My uncle requires me to marry her, don't you see, or be cut off with a brass farthing. So I have learned to be deucedly fond of her, you know."

"Very reasonable and like a man," said Adam.

"Yes, I fancy so myself. I am coming to the point."

"Then there is a point?"

"Oh dear me, yes. You see, as you don't care for Lady Margaret, that way, and I do——"

"Why then, to be sure, take her and let me give you my blessing," Rust interrupted. "I will do this with all my heart."

"Thanks, old chap, but that is not quite the point," Suffle assured him. "The fact of the matter is, she rather likes you, Rust, you know. I'm bound to admit she does, though God knows why, and we are two sensible men, you know, and that is what I wanted to talk about."

"You do me too great an honor," Adam assured him. "But what would you have me do?"

"Why—that's just the point. Of course I wouldn't like to ask you to clear out of the country——"

"Don't let modesty stand in your way, my

dear Suffle. This favor would be nothing—a mere trifle.”

“Oh no, now, I wouldn’t permit it,” said Suffle, magnanimously. “But you are such a deucedly clever fellow, don’t you know, that I thought you might be able to devise something, something to—well, you know.”

“Yes, oh yes,” said Adam, pulling calmly at his long golden mustache. He meditated for a moment and idly picked up a dice-box, placed in readiness for the evening’s play upon the table. “Do you ever fripper away your time with these? If you do, perhaps we might arrange a little harmless device without much trouble.”

At one of the doors, the figure of Lady Margaret appeared and disappeared as Suffle expressed his eagerness to know what the plan in Adam’s head might be. Although she had glided swiftly from room to room in search of Rust, Lady Margaret had frowned when she saw him in company with her fiancé, and petulantly beating her fan in her fragrant little palm, she had gone back around toward a secondary entrance, in which a heavy curtain hung. She was vaguely wondering what the two could find to talk about together, and to what extent they were gambling, that they went at the dice thus early.

She now met Sir William Phipps, Governor-elect of New England, who had finally arrived and who was scanning the gathering company for a sight of Adam Rust.

“Oh, how well you are looking, Sir William,” she cried to Phipps, delightedly.

"I am looking for a friend," said the captain, with his customary bluntness. "But thank you, Lady Margaret, thank you, heartily."

"If you are looking for a friend, why, look over my head?" she said to him, prettily. "Oh, you dear Colonial Governors are such delightfully honest people. We all have to like you, really."

"I have found some honest men in England," said the Captain, with conviction. "The Puritans are growing numerous among your people."

Lady Margaret laughed, spontaneously enough. "And what about our women?" she said. "Do you find them at all—well, charming?"

"Some are as bold as a pirate," he said, without intending anything personal. He could see many ropes and clusters of jewels, gleaming from afar. "And some of them must have plundered many a good ship of her treasure," he added. "If I don't put about and do some cruising, I shall never speak that boy to-night."

He bowed, somewhat jerkily, and sauntered off. Lady Margaret continued on her way around toward that curtained door, on the other side of which she had seen Rust and Suffle with the dice.

William Phipps spent no further time in conversing with the women, beyond a word as he passed, so that finally he came to the gambling apartment, where he found his protégé. Knitting his brows for a second, in an ill-concealed annoyance, to see Adam Rust engaged in such a pursuit as this, he stood there in the doorway, hoping to catch Adam's eye and so to admonish him silently for indulging even a moment's whim at this vice.

"One thousand more," said Adam, somewhat hotly. Sir William pricked up his ears in amazement.

"Lost again!" Rust exclaimed. "The devil is in the dice!" His back was toward the curtained door. There was a mirror, however, directly across the room. Watching the glass he presently beheld the reflection of a movement, where the tapestry swayed behind him. "Three thousand now, or nothing!" he added, desperately.

The dice rattled out of the box in the silence that followed.

"It's luck," said Suffle, scooping up the dice to throw again.

"It's sorcery!" exclaimed the rover, in evident heat. "Come, sir, I have two thousand left. I'll stake it all on a single throw!"

Phipps would have interfered, had it been in any place but a private house, where the scandal would spread so swiftly. He twitched in nervousness, as he gripped the cane with which he would have liked to knock the dice-box endways.

The throw was completed.

"I'm done!" said Rust. "I've nothing more to stake!"

"Oh, come," said Suffle, tauntingly, "play your sword, your—surely you must have something you prize. What, no resources? Must we cease the play so soon?"

"My sword? No!" said Adam, with temper. "But stay; since you speak so slightly of my sword, I have one more stake to offer."

"By all means name it and play."

"My stake, sir, is the Lady Margaret," Adam growled at him, angrily. "Betrothed to you, she loves me more. Come, sir, stake me a thousand against my chances to win her and take her away from you, heart and soul. A thousand, sir, and if you can win it—your field shall be open, you shall hear nor fear no more from me!"

"By my faith," said Suffie, rising, as Adam had done, "you hold this lady lightly, that you prattle of her name like this. Better I should run you through, for an arrant knave."

"Bah!" said Rust, "you think more of your winnings than you do of your lady. You hesitate and scold over a paltry thousand. Stake it, man, or by my troth I shall tell her what valuation you put upon her worth."

Lady Margaret's face appeared for a second at the curtain. It was white with rage.

"You insult this lady with your monstrous proposition," cried Suffie.

"And you insult her worse, with your parsimony!" came the swift retort.

"It is calumny for you to say she loves you!" Suffie growled.

"Yet stake me, sir, or you shall see me get her and laugh at your stinginess," Rust flung at him banteringly. "Come, sir, one more moment and I withdraw the offer."

"Done!" said Suffie, "for by 'sdeath, my fortune shall prove you a liar! Throw the dice."

Adam threw and counted. "My luck has changed at last," he said, in triumph.

"We shall see," retorted Suffle, and flinging the dice he sat down and roared with laughter.

"Lost!" said Adam, tragically. "So be it. To the devil with you, sir; and I wish you joy of your winnings."

He strode from the table, met Sir William Phipps at the door, winked at him merrily and so drew him out in the hall.

"What's this? What's this?" said the Governor, excitedly. "I come here to see you, with news on my tongue, and find you—like this!"

"Tush, William," said Adam, laughing boyishly, and as cool as a fish. "I was betting in farthings. I must have lost a hundred. Did you think the luck was all with Suffle?"

"But, sir, this—this lady?"

"There is more than one way to cure a woman of a heart's distemper," said the young man, cheerfully. "Lady Margaret was just there, behind the curtain. But this is wasting time. What is your news?"

Phipps looked at him in wonder, for a moment, then shaking his head, sadly, he presently drew his hand down across his face, to his double chin, as if to wipe out a smile, which had come out of his eyes and traveled all over his countenance.

"Adam," he said, "they have made me Governor of the colony, and I want you to go home with me to Boston."

Adam said nothing, for a moment, then he answered: "Let's get out of this. I want some fresher air to think it over in."

They were soon walking out at the gate, arm in arm.

The air was not only fresh, it was bitter cold. When they turned to go down the street, Adam having first looked about, without seeing what he sought, old Halberd issued from a niche, where he had been dancing to keep himself warm, and followed along behind his master.

"Well, now that you have thought it over," said Phipps, at last, "what do you say?"

Adam had thought it over, from a thousand standpoints. The magnet at Boston had drawn him and drawn him so long that he felt his whole soul was already across the Atlantic. Why fight his longing any further? Why not at least go home, look the proposition in the face and perhaps be disillusionized?

"I'm your man," he said, as if to catch himself before he should alter his mind. "When are you sailing?"

CHAPTER IX.

REVELATIONS.

WHEN the Andros government came to an end, Edward Randolph had languished in jail for a brief time only. The Puritans were chiefly angered at his master, whom they had finally put aboard a ship and sent away from the country. Thus the more mischievous spirit, and author of many of their wrongs, escaped to work his malignant will upon them for years.

Randolph was so crafty, so insidious, and willing to remain so in the background, that until it was quite too late to redeem their position, the Puritans failed even to suspect him of the monstrous iniquities he induced them to commit upon one another. The witchcraft persecutions, which he fastened upon them, had not originated in his brain, fertile as that organ was for the growth of things diabolical. He got his cue from England, where thousands of persons perished, at the stake and otherwise, convicted on fantastic testimony of practising arts that were black and mysterious.

Randolph, realizing that Boston had been made too warm for active operations, began his work in Salem. That center offered him exceptional opportunities. The growth of the dread disease was appalling. His-

tory which would convey an adequate idea of this criminal fanaticism should be bound in charred human skin.

Boston was duly afflicted with the scourge. Randolph then returned, quietly, and so manipulated his work and his dupes, from behind his own scenes, that scores of old women were charged with and convicted of witchcraft, in Randolph's hope of wreaking his vengeance thus on whatsoever old woman it might have been who had told Garde Merrill of his affair with Hester Hodder. Having never been able to ascertain that this person was Goody Dune, he was sweeping his net in all waters, to make sure of his prey, in the same merciless spirit that Herod slew all the male infants, to accomplish his terrible purpose.

When Governor Phipps, with Adam Rust and Increase Mather, arrived at Boston, in the frigate "Nonsuch," in May, 1692, the prisons were crowded full of witches, for the smell of whose burning or rotting flesh scores of fanatical maniacs were clamoring.

All Massachusetts had known that William Phipps, the Governor who had risen so mightily from the ranks of the working men among them, was coming. The name of the lane wherein his house had been built was altered to Charter street, in his honor; the citizens beat their drums; the disciples of gladness in the stomach arranged for a banquet; the hordes marched in joy and with pomp and Puritan splendor, which lacked nothing in ceremony, as Sir William was conducted to his house and then to the public dinner. Even the fanatics waxed enthusiastic and developed symptoms of being yet more greatly pursued and be-

witched by the witches whose incarceration they had already procured.

In the madness, confusion and excess of glee, two persons were more inwardly stirred than all the others, not by the arrival of William Phipps, but by that of Adam Rust. One was Garde, to whose ears and heart the story of Adam's return came swiftly flying. The other was Edward Randolph, who saw an opportunity for deviltry for which he had waited so long that he had almost despaired of ever tasting its bitter-sweet. With his own eyes he beheld Adam Rust, and he grinned.

At the end of that long, fatiguing day, Rust retired to the privacy of his tavern apartments, secured haphazard, during one of the moments less filled than the others with pressing events. Here he sat him down for the purpose of thinking. He wondered why he had come to Boston again, and what he would do, now that at last he lived under the same sky with Garde, hearing the same sounds she was hearing, breathing the same fragrance of the Spring that stole to her. Should he try to see her? Perhaps. But to speak to her—no, he thought he could make no advance in this direction. But he could learn whether she had married, as of course she must have done, long before, and then—well, something in him ought to be satisfied—that something which had urged him so inexorably to return and to make this moment possible.

In the midst of his reveries, he heard a knock upon his door. It was poor old Halberd, doubtless, who had been so forlorn and so ill on the ocean. He had left him asleep, but, no matter, he would be glad to see him, privacy of thought notwithstanding.

"Come in," he said. "Come in."

The door opened, not as Halberd was wont to perform an act so simple, and Adam was conscious that a stranger had intruded upon him. He looked up, winked his eyes and looked more intently, as if absolutely incredulous that he was awake and sane.

His visitor was Edward Randolph.

"Mr. Rust, I am glad to see you again in Boston," said the man, coming forward in a tentative manner and smiling by sheer force of effort. "You didn't expect me, but I have taken this early opportunity of calling, to say I know what a great wrong I did you in the past, and to make what reparation I can."

"The devil could do no more," said Adam, looking him over calmly. "And I doubt if the devil ever had your impertinence."

"You do me wrong," Randolph assured him, meekly. "I could do no less than to come here and tender what apologies I may, and to do you a small favor. I was grossly misled, concerning your worth and your courage, by spiteful persons who had, as I now understand, some personal grudge."

"As I knew but two men in the town, when first I had the honor of appraising you for a rascal," said Adam, "your tale pleases me but indifferently well. As for favors, I have none to ask of you, and none to grant."

"Yet, if only in a Christian spirit," the fellow insisted, "you must permit me to beg your pardon for my errors of the past. I have long regretted my grievous mistake of judgment, and for that long I have

desired an opportunity of showing my mortification and doing you the one kindness in my power."

"In the spirit of the Christian crusaders," said Rust, "I feel that I could deny you little. You would do well, sir, to retire in good order while my indisposition to throw you through the window is still upon me."

"But, my dear Mr. Rust, you don't know what an injury you are doing to yourself," the visitor went on. "If you knew how cruelly we were both wronged, almost at the same time and by the same person, you would listen, if only for that one compassion."

"I have been wronged in Boston," Adam agreed, ominously, "and shatter my hilt if I know why I hesitate to redress myself while I may."

"But I did you no wrong to your heart, sir. Our injuries were both of the heart," Randolph reiterated, persistently. "Look, sir, I had a heart, six years ago, and I felt it cruelly trampled under foot—the same foot that trampled upon yours, and here——"

"Beware!" Adam growled. "I shall cut out your tongue, for little more. Begone, sir, and thank your God at every step you take, that you still live—if you value your life at all; and this I am driven to doubt."

"Here, here!" replied Randolph, nervously, and with shaking fingers he drew from his pocket a packet of paper folded in the form of a letter. "You will never believe me till I show you this. But I lay my heart open—I expose my wounds, to prove how you wrong me. Read it, read it—the letter she sent me—and then I shall be willing to bide by your answer."

Adam could not fail to be impressed by the man's

tenacity of purpose. Being a just man, he had a faint suspicion dart through his head that, after all, the man might not have known what he was doing when he committed all his fiendish acts, years before. There had never been any sufficient reason for what he had done, that Adam knew. He took the letter, briefly to see what it was the fellow meant and wanted.

He began to read, and then to feel that the man had obviously undergone some trial, severe and not readily to be forgotten. It was Garde's own letter to himself he was reading.

"She sent me that and then broke my heart after," said Randolph, speaking in a low, emotional voice, while Adam looked at the letter. "As if she had not shattered my life sufficiently before."

"I'm sorry for you," said Rust, after a moment. "Here, I don't care to pry into your letter. Take it, and go in peace."

"But read it, read it. You don't know who wrote it," said Randolph, who was white with excitement. "I shouldn't have come to you here with my mortifying apologies, if there had not been a bond between us."

Adam gave him a look, as of one baffled by an inscrutable mystery. He could not comprehend his visitor's meaning. Then suddenly a flush leaped into his face, as he remembered something he had heard in those by-gone days, when he walked with that youth, whose very name he could not recall, from Plymouth to Boston.

He read the letter again with a new interest, a terrible interest. He had gone away from Garde—sent

away—with a stab in his heart, from which he had never been able to recover. He had thought at first she sent him away as a renegade, a fugitive from pseudo-justice, whom to have loved openly would be a disgrace. He had thought then that perhaps she loved Wainsworth, or even this Randolph. He had thought till he nearly went crazy, for circumstances had compelled him to flee from Boston for his life, and therefore to flee from all explanations which might have been made. Garde having released him from jail, he had been driven to think she believed him innocent. She had said she could do no less. Then he had been left no belief to stand on but that of her loving some one else more than she did himself. She had admitted that something had happened. Cornered thus, he had found the case hopeless, and thoughts of return to Boston then had seemed to him madness.

This letter, now in his hand, confirmed all those more terrible thoughts and beliefs. She had done some wrong to Randolph, too, as she here confessed in her letter. She had believed some infamous story against him, and now prayed his forgiveness. And what, in God's name, had she then added to this first wrong to the man, that Randolph now was so bitter?

Terribly stirred, he raced his glance over the pages and so to the little quaintly affectionate ending. Then he read her signature, "Garde—John Rosella."

John Rosella!—the name of that youth! She! Garde!

He felt he should suddenly go mad. That boy he had so learned to love—had been Garde! She had written this letter—she had signed that name, which meant so

much to him and to her, and so little to any one else !

He made a strange little sound, and then he began to read the letter over again, from the first, letting every word, every syllable, sink into his soul with its comfort and its fragrance of love. He forgot that Randolph stood there before him. He was oblivious of everything. He was on that highroad again. He was standing with Garde in the garden at midnight, her kisses still warm on his lips.

"You see there is a bond between us," said Randolph.

Adam ceased reading, galvanically. But for a second he did not raise his eyes. He folded the letter and held it in his hand. He arose to his feet and slowly moved between Randolph and the door.

"There is a bond between us," he agreed, speaking with nice deliberation. "It is something more than a bond. It's a tie of blood and bone and suffering."

"I thought you would see it," said Randolph. "This was all I came to tell you,—this, and my sense of having done you wrong."

"Oh yes, I see it," said Adam, turning the key in the lock and putting it calmly in his pocket, "I see it all clearly. By the way, sir, who is John Rosella, if I may ask ?"

Randolph had become pale. His eyes were growing wild. He had watched Rust lock the door with quaking dread.

"John Rosella ?" he repeated, with a sickening sense of having overlooked something important, which he had thought an insignificant trifle ; "why, that is

merely the—her middle names. Her full name is Garde John Rosella Merrill."

"I trust you are gentleman enough to fight," said Rust, placing the letter in his pocket, "for I shall tell you, sir, that you are a liar, a scoundrel, a murderous blackguard."

Walking up to the staring wretch, calmly, Adam slapped his face till the blow resounded in the room and Halberd came hastening to the door to know what could be the matter.

"I rang the bell," said Rust, who opened the door with great deliberation. "Bring a sword for one. The gentleman wishes to fight."

"What do you mean, sir?" said the trembling coward. "Give me back my letter. I shall leave this place at once!"

"Will you jump through the window?" Adam inquired, with mock concern. "Don't call that letter yours again, or I may not let you off with a mere killing."

Halberd came with his sword. Adam drew his own good blade from the battered scabbard he had always retained, and looked at the edge and the point, critically.

"I refuse to fight you!" said Randolph, who had once seen that terrible length of steel at play. "I demand to be released from this place!"

Rust went up and slapped him again. "Get up just manhood enough to raise that sword," Adam implored. "Take it and strike any sort of a foul blow at me—one of your foulest—do! you dog."

The craven tried to make a run at the door. Adam

pushed him back and kicked him again toward the center of the room.

"This is murder! I refuse to fight with such a villain!" cried the fellow. "Let me out, or I shall call for help."

"You wouldn't dare to let anybody know you are in town," said Rust, contemptuously. "Howl, do howl, and let me tell the public what you are. Halberd, alas, there is no manhood in it. Therefore fetch me the whip I saw in your apartments, for a sad bit of business."

To all of Randolph's protests and wild chatterings of fear and hatred, Rust was deaf. He took the whip, which Halberd presently brought, and proceeded to cut Randolph across the face, the legs, the shoulders and the hands till the craven smarted with a score of purple welts.

"Halberd, you may clean your boots afterward," Adam said at last. "Be good enough to kick the dog from the room."

Halberd placed but two of his aids to departure, and then, Rust opening the door, the craven flew madly out and away, a maniac in appearance, an assassin in his state of mind.

CHAPTER X.

AFTER SIX YEARS.

AT Grandther Donner's house, Garde had passed the day with her heart so fluttering between hope and fear that she was all unstrung by the time the evening arrived. She could bear it no longer, then, and with a shawl on her head she started out to go to the Soams' to learn what she might of the many events of the hour.

In the garden she paused. The stillness, the calm, the redolence of Spring, burgeoning into maidenly summer, brought back to her mind that similar time, six long years before, when she and Adam had met here among the flowers, for that brief time of joy.

The fire of love, kept so sacred by the vestal virgin spirit of her nature, burned upward in her cheeks, as warm, as ardent as ever, after these years of her lonely vigil.

But would he ever stand there again, in the garden? Would he ever more clasp her hands on the pickets of the gate? Or would he now prove disdainful, proud of his friendship with the new Governor, aloof and silent, as he had been since she sent him her letter?

No matter what might be, she so hungered to hear some word of his coming, some meager description of

how he looked, some mere hearsay of how he bore himself, that it seemed as if she must consume herself with impatience on her way to her uncle's.

In the dusk which was swiftly descending on the face of the world, she closed the gate behind her and started along the road, her face so pale and yet so eager, in her yearning, that it was almost luminous. She was presently conscious that some one, dimly visible, ahead, was rapidly approaching. She drew her shawl a little more closely about her face and quickened her footsteps, the sooner to pass this pedestrian.

A metallic tinkle came to her ears and made her heart give an extra bound, she knew not why. It had simply sounded like a scabbard, beating its small accompaniment to sturdy strides. She looked up, timidly, to see who it was that carried a sword into such a quiet part of Boston. Then she halted and suddenly placed her hand out, to the near-by fence, for a moment's support.

The man was almost passing her by, where she stood. He halted. He made some odd little sound, and then he remained there, looking upon her, his hand coming involuntarily up to his heart.

Garde looked up in his face, without fear, but not without sadness, wistfully—with the inquiry of six long years in her steadfast eyes.

"Garde," said Adam, in a voice she barely heard, "Garde—I have—come home. I never got your letter till to-night."

She could not answer, for a moment.

"I—have been waiting," she then said, and striving to hold her lips from trembling, she let two great tears

trickle slowly across her face as she still looked up in his eyes.

There was nothing he could say. He read her whole story of faithfulness and of suffering, her epic of a love that could not die, in that one long look. Slowly he went up to her and taking her face in his hands he kissed away the tears from her cheeks. He put her head gently against his breast and let her cry.

She still held to the fence, as if she dared not too suddenly lean on his love, without which she had learned to live so long. But gradually, as he held her there, saying nothing, but softly kissing her hair and the one little hand he had taken in his own, her arms crept upward about his shoulders and her heart beat against his, in a peace surpassing anything of earth.

"My Garde," he finally began to whisper, over and over again, "my own Garde—my darling, precious Garde."

"Oh, this may all be wrong, Adam," she answered him, after a time. "I don't understand it. We don't know what has happened, in all these years. Oh, how did you happen to come?"

"You drew me, sweetheart," he said, in a voice made tremulous with emotion. "I have had no peace till now. I have loved you so! I have dreamed of you so! But I never knew—till to-night, when I got your letter."

"You—never got it till to-night? Oh Adam," she said. "Oh, Adam, I have been so punished for the wrong I did. Oh, you can never, never forgive me!"

"There, there, sweetheart," he said to her soothingly, letting her cry out the sobs she had stifled so

vainly. "Forgive you, dear? You had no need to ask for forgiveness—you who came to me there in that jail—you, whose sweet little motherly spirit so provided for my poor old beef-eaters, when they were hungry and fleeing for their lives. Dearest, I don't see how you did it, when I was a hunted renegade, a fugitive, with doubled infamies piled upon my head. Oh, forgive me, dear, that ever I doubted my own little mate."

"No, I should never have believed them—not all the world!" she protested. "My Adam. My Adam."

With his strong arm about her, and her head leaned in confidence and love on his shoulder, he led her back to the garden, at once the scene of their joys and tragedies.

He enthroned her on the steps of the porch, where as a child she had been enthroned, when he as her boy-lover had sat, as now, at her feet and listened to the dainty caresses of her voice. Only now he held her hand in his and placed it on his cheek and kissed it fondly, as he listened and told her of how he had come at last to receive the letter.

At this she was frightened. She wanted to cradle his head upon her bosom, now, and hold forth a hand to shield him from danger. She felt that the perils for them both were clustered about his fearless head and that hers was the right to protect.

"Oh, please be careful, Adam, dear," she implored. "That man is a terrible man. Oh, I wish you had let him go. You will be careful, dear. You must be careful, and watchful, every moment."

His reply was a kiss and a boyish laugh. Now that he had her once more, he said, and now that nothing should ever part them again, his world was complete, and there were no dangers, nor evils, nor sorrows.

Then he begged her to tell him of the years that had passed. He petted her fondly, as she spoke of her long, long wait. She seemed to him thrice more beautiful, in the calm and dignity of her womanhood, which had laid not so much as a faded petal on her beauty and her endless youth.

He exchanged a history of heart-aches, matching with one of his own every pang she had ever endured. There was something ecstatic, now, in the light of their new-found rapture, in recounting those long days of sadness and despair. Every pain thus rehearsed drew them the closer, till their love took on a sacredness, as if suffering and constancy had wedded them long before. Like parents who have buried the children they loved, they were made subdued and yet more truly fervent, more absolute in the divine passion which held them heart to heart.

And so, at last, when Garde was sure that Adam ought to go, they walked hand in hand to the gate together.

"Sweetheart, let me go outside, for a moment," said Adam, quickly shutting the barrier between them. "Now, with your two dear hands in mine, it is just as it was six years ago. The night is the same, your beauty is the same, our hearts and love are the same as before, and nothing has ever come between us—except this gate."

He kissed her hands and her sweet face, as he had done on that other happy night.

"And we can open the gate," said Garde, in a little croon of delight.

Adam laughed, like the boy he was. He flung open the gate and went inside and took her in his arms, kissing her upon the lips, rapturously, time after time.

"Oh Garde, I love you so!" he said. "I love you! I adore you, my own little mate!"

"I could have waited fifty years," she answered him, nestling close and patting his hand as she held it, in excess of joy, to her heart. "Oh Adam! My Adam!"

CHAPTER XI.

A BLOW IN THE DARK.

THE rover, so lost in exalted happiness that he hardly knew where he was going, when at length he said his final good night to Garde, was not aware that the faithful old Halberd finally fell into his tracks behind him and followed him off toward the tavern.

Immensely relieved again to see his master, whom he had not been able to locate before, the old beef-eater was soon convinced that Adam was in a mood the like of which had not appeared in the family for many a day. He therefore glided silently after the dreamer, a rod or so to the rear, waiting until Adam should turn about, as was his wont, to bid him walk at his side.

But to-night the Sachem was so thoroughly engrossed with his love and his forming plans, that he completely forgot to think of his lorn retinue, and therefore the beef-eater felt more alone and sad than usual. There was nothing in Boston, save Adam, with which he could associate any thoughts of jollier days. There was nothing but Adam left in the world, to which to devote the great fund of affection and devotion in his simple breast.

But he was making no complaint, not even to himself. Whatever the Sachem did was right. Nothing that Adam could have done would have driven him

away, nor have altered his love by so much as one jot. All he desired was the privilege of loving his master, at whose heels he would have followed, though the path led to Hell itself, and this with never so much as a question, nor a murmur of hesitation.

The moon had been silvering the roofs of the houses for some time, and Adam and Halberd wended their way, in their short procession, through the deserted business streets of the town. Masses of shadow lay upon the sidewalk, where Adam was striding buoyantly along.

Within fifteen feet of him, and between him and Adam, suddenly Halberd heard a sound that made him halt where he stood. Three figures, their faces masked with black cloth, ran out from a deep doorway, where they had crowded back, for concealment, and darted upon the rover, walking unconsciously onward.

“Sachem ! Sachem !” cried the beef-eater, wildly.

He darted forward, in time to see Adam turn to receive a stab in the neck and a blow on the head that sent him to earth before he could even so much as raise a hand to ward off his murderous assailants.

Dragging his sword from his scabbard as he ran, old Halberd leaped frantically into the midst of the three assassins, ready to battle against any odds conceivable, in this the climax-moment of his loyalty.

He struck but a single blow, which fell upon one of the bludgeons held by the masked ruffians. He screamed out his terrible tocsin of anguish and rage. Then a blow from behind him crushed in his skull and he fell across the master he had striven to serve, a corpse.

Waiting for nothing further, the three figures sped away, down the street, dived into the darkness of an alley and were gone, past all finding, when a few startled citizens opened their windows or doors and looked out on the street to see what the awful cries of Halberd had betokened.

"I see something—down on the sidewalk," said the voice of one of the men. "The lantern, wife, the lantern!"

"What is it? What is it?" called another, from across the way.

And others answering, that they knew not what it meant, or that it had sounded like some terrible deed being done, there were presently half a dozen awed men coming forth, when their neighbor appeared at his door with his light.

The black, still heap which had been seen from a window smote them all with horror. A dark stream, from which the light was suggestively reflected, already trickled to the gutter. They lifted Halberd from the second prostrate form and found that Adam was swiftly bleeding to death from a ghastly wound in the neck, from which the life-fluid was leaping out in gushes.

"Turn him over, turn him over!" commanded the man with the lantern. "Run to my house and ask the wife for everything to tie up an artery—bandages, too!"

He knelt down in the red stream. Digging his fingers into the gaping, red mouth of the wound, he clutched upon the severed artery with a skill at once brutal and sure. The gushes ceased, almost entirely.

Adam's face, already deathly white, had been turned upward.

"Saints preserve us!" said one of the citizens. "It's the bosom friend of the Governor!"

"Then we know where to take him, if he doesn't die in spite of me," said the skilful surgeon who had pounced upon the wound. "Look to the other man and see if he too, is bleeding."

One of the other men had already loosened the collar about old Halberd's neck. Another came to assist him.

"He's bleeding a little, from the back of his head," said he. "O Lord! He's dead!"

The doctor's wife came running to the place herself, with her husband's case in which he had a score of cunning tools and the needs of his craft.

The good woman pushed the men aside and with an assurance and a courage almost totally unknown in her sex, at the time, in such a case as this, bent down above the wounded man and lent to her husband the nimble fingers and the quick comprehension without which he might easily have failed to prevent that deadly loss of blood.

As it was, Rust was at the door of death. The turn he had made, when Halberd called out in alarm, had saved him from inevitable death. The steel driven so viciously into his neck, would have severed the jugular vein completely had he turned the fraction of a second less soon than he did, or an inch less far.

The blow on his temple had glanced, so that half the power, which in the case of Halberd had crushed in the skull instantly, had been lost, nevertheless it

had served to render him wholly unconscious. Therefore, two hours later, when brave little Mrs. Phipps got him laid in a clean, sweet couch, he looked like death, and his heart-beat was feeble and faintly fluttering between mere life and the Great Stillness.

CHAPTER XII.

ADAM'S NURSE.

WHEN the intelligence of the almost unparalleled crime spread with terror and awe in its wake through Boston, in the morning, Garde heard it like a knell—a fatality almost to have been expected, when she and Adam had been at last so happy. She did not faint. Not even a moan escaped her lips. She turned white and remained white.

“Grandther,” she said to the old man who owed his restoration to health and almost complete soundness of mind to her ministrations, “I am betrothed to this friend of our new Governor’s. I shall go to attend him.”

She left her grandfather staring at her in wonder, and with only her shawl on her head, she went to the “fair brick house” which William Phipps had built for his wife at the corner of Salem and Charter streets in the town.

“I am betrothed to Adam Rust,” she repeated, simply. “I have come to attend him.”

As if poor Garde had not already, in six years of waiting and hoping and vain regrets, sufficiently suffered for a moment’s lack of faith in her lover, the anguish now came upon her in a flood tide. Adam no sooner recovered a heart-beat strong enough to give

promise of renewed steadiness, than he lapsed from his unconscious condition into one of delirium.

Had Garde been wholly in ignorance of his past and his life of many tragedies, she would have been doomed to learn of all of it now. He lived it all over, a hundred times, and told of it, brokenly, excitedly, at times with sallies of witty sentences, but for the most part in the sighs with which his life had filled his heart to overflowing, but to which he had never before given utterance.

She knew now what the boy had suffered when King Philip, the Sachem of the Wampanoags, was slain, with the people of his nation. She felt the pangs he had felt when, on first returning to Boston, he had believed himself supplanted in Garde's affections by his friend Henry Wainsworth. She heard him croon to the little Narragansett child, as he limped again through the forest. And then she sounded the depths of a man's despair when the whole world and the woman he loves drive him forth, abased.

Yet much as she suffered with him in this long rehearsal of his heartaches, there was still one little consolation to her soul.

The one name only that he spoke, and spoke again and again, in murmurs of love and in heart-cries of agony, was—Garde.

Having acquired her skill in the harsh school where her grandfather's illness had been the master, Garde could almost have rejoiced in this reparation she was making to Adam for what she had contributed to his pangs in the past, had it not been that his hovering so at the edge of death frightened all other emotions than

alarm from her breast. Nevertheless she believed he would live. He could not die, she insisted to herself, while she gave him a love so vast and so sustaining.

This feeling was fairly an instinct. And the truth in which it was grounded came struggling to the fore, one morning, when Adam opened his eyes, after his first refreshing sleep, and laughed at her gayly, if a little weakly, to see her there, bending down above him.

"John Rosella," he said, "I have been dreaming of you—the sweetest boy that ever lived."

"Oh, Adam," said Garde, suddenly crimsoning. "Oh—now you—you mustn't talk. You must go back to sleep at once."

Adam was drowsy, despite himself. "I remember—every word—we said," he murmured, "and every—look of your sweet—sweet face." And then he fell again into peaceful slumber.

Arrived so far as this toward recovery, he made rapid progress. Healthy and wholesome as he was, sound, from habits of clean, right living, he mended almost too fast, according to Garde's ideas of convalescence, for she feared he would rise in revolt, over soon, and do himself an injury by abandoning care and comfort before she could pronounce him quite himself.

In reality there had been but little more than his loss of blood to contend with, save that his state of mind had engendered a fever, as a result of all he had undergone, so that when this latter was allayed and the wound in his neck was healing with astonishing rapidity, his strength came back to his muscles and limbs by leaps and bounds. Therefore, despite her

solicitude, Garde was soon happy to see him again on his feet and making his way about the house, his face a little wan and white, but the twinkle in his eye as merry as the light in a jewel.

He could furnish no accurate or reliable information as to whom his murderous assailants had been. He could only conjecture that Randolph had been at the bottom of the affair, from motives of vengeance. This was the truth. But the disappearance of Randolph from Boston was reckoned so variously, as having taken place anywhere from two days to three years before, that nothing could be reliably determined.

Moreover, it sufficed for Adam and Garde that they were here, in the land of the living, together, and though it made the rover feel sad to think of the loss of his last beef-eater, the faithful old Halberd.

CHAPTER XIII.

GOODY IN THE TOILS.

THE worthy Puritan citizens of Boston fêted Governor Phipps in one breath and asked him to make concessions of his powers to his council in the next. They worked themselves weary with enthusiasm over his advent and then they wore him out with exactions, with their epidemic of persecuting witches and with the faults they found with his methods of life and government.

Sir William had not been long in his new harness, when he was heard to wish he again had his broadax in hand and were building a ship of less dimensions than one of state. A little of his old love for his calling and the men it had gathered about him was expressed in a dinner which he gave to ship-carpenters, from whose ranks he was proud to have risen, as he told them and told the world. He had a hasty temper, as a result of having been so long a captain on the sea, accustomed to absolute obedience at the word of command. Yet his squalls of anger were soon blown over, leaving him merry, honest and lovable as before.

Unfortunately Governor Phipps was largely under the influence of Increase Mather and his son, the Reverend Cotton Mather, who were both as mad fanatics on the topic of religion and withcraft as one could

have found in a day's walk. The influence over Phipps had been gained by the elder Mather in England, where he and Sir William were so long associated in their efforts to right their colony and its charter.

Witchcraft persecutions, having fairly run amuck in England, Increase Mather had enjoyed exceptional opportunities for observing the various phenomena developed by this dreadful disease. He arrived in Boston after Randolph had succeeded far beyond the dreams of his own malice in starting the madness on its terrible career. The field offered an attraction not to be withstood, by either of the Mathers. They were soon fairly gorging themselves on the wonders of the invisible world, testimonies and barbarous punishments.

Lieutenant-Governor Stoughton was an active figure in all this lamentable business. Phipps was dragged into the maelstrom bodily. He pitied the frightened wretches in the prisons and secretly instructed his jailers to be remiss in their duties of chaining, ironing and otherwise inflicting needless punishment on these helpless mortals.

The more effectually and quietly to turn the fearful tide, so appallingly engulfing the minds of the wrought-up populace, Phipps organized a court of Oyer and Terminer, wherein he sat himself, with seven magistrates, to try the wretched old women, dragged screaming to the farcical examinations. At these trials, devilish children swore away the lives of fellow-creatures, abandoned alike by their kind and by their God. In this court of his own making, William Phipps was slowly and surely putting a stop to the mania, for

the horrors of some of the executions sent a thrill of fright and dread through the whole of Boston.

Exercising his power of pardoning, and then expending his own money to assist them to flee from the state, William Phipps saved so many defenseless women that he fairly broke the fabric of the awful mania in twain. Early after his arrival, however, he was called away to Plymouth. No sooner was his back turned than the zealots pounced, tooth and nail, upon a new crop of witches and hailed them before the court, on trial for their lives, in haste before the Governor should return to work his leniency upon them.

Thus it came about that Garde, having exhausted the small supply of simples possessed by herself and Goodwife Phipps, went to Goody Dune's and there witnessed the work of a witch-hunting mob.

It was a warm, summery morning, fit jewel for the year's diadem of things beautiful. Cries, yells, of pretended fear, and harsh, discordant prayers, screamed into the air, assailed Garde's ears before she could yet see the little flower-surrounded hut where Goody lived. She felt a sudden misgiving strike through her heart as she hastened onward.

She came upon the scene in a moment. Nearly fifty men and boys, with a sprinkling of mere girls and one or two women, were storming the small stronghold of the old wise woman, who had done so much for those afflicted by ailments and troubles. Indeed in the crowd there were many citizens who had blessed her name and the wisdom by which she had mended their bodily woes. But all now were mad with excitement. Some were purposely frothing at the mouth. A dozen

leaped frantically about, declaring they were being pinched and bitten by the demons that Goody was actuating to malice. Young boys slyly put nails and pins in their mouths and then spat them forth, to show what evils were then and there being perpetrated upon them.

The tidy little garden was trampled to pitiable wreckage of flowers and vines. The house was being boldly entered by a few lusty knaves, with Psalms Higgler and Isaiah Pinchbecker in their midst. Sounds of wild beating, upon the pans and kettles inside, made half the assembled people turn pale with self-induced fear, which they loved to experience.

Suddenly Goody's old black cat came bounding forth. The men, boys and women fell down in affright, screaming that the devil was upon them. To add to their horror and superstitious dismay, the jackdaw, Rex, came flying out. He perched for a moment on the ridge and then circled once or twice about the house. He was wounded, for the ruffians in the cottage had beaten him savagely, with sticks and whips. He was bedraggled ; for they had thrown water upon him. His feathers were all awry. He was altogether a sorry spectacle.

"B-u-h-h—it's cold," called the bird. "Fools, fools, fools!" and flapping his ragged wings so that they clapped against his sides as he flew, he started straight for the woods and was soon out of sight.

If the witch-hunters had been smitten with delightful fear before, they were appalled by this terrible bird. They fell down upon their knees and wept and prayed and made a thousand and one mysterious signs

by which evil could be averted. Those who knew in their hearts that the whole thing, up to this, had been humbug and fraud, now quaked with a fear that was genuine. The devil himself had said some horrible, unthinkable rigmarole which would doubtless cast a spell upon them such as they would never be rid of again in their lives. Their children would be born with fishes' tails, with asses' legs, with seven heads. Above the wails of anguish, which arose on the air, came the shouts of the captors of Goody Dune. They were now seen dragging her forth with hooks, which were supposed to insulate the operator from the evils which a witch could otherwise pronounce upon her enemies with dire and withering effect. And then it was seen what the shouting of triumph was.

Each of the captors bore a Bible in his hand from which he read, haphazard, at the top of his voice as he walked, thus disinfecting himself, or fumigating himself, as it were, to prevent him from catching the evil which was hovering about the witch, like an aureole of dangerous microbes of the devil's own breeding.

No sooner did old Goody's well-known form appear than the fanatics in the garden fled in a panic for the gate, howling and wailing their prayers more loudly than before, but pushing and jostling one another and falling endways, as they tried to run and to look behind them at the same time. They must see everything, whatever the cost.

The men were seen to be armed with pitchforks. There is nothing in the way of a weapon which your devil so abhors as a pitchfork, in the hands of any one save himself.

This noisy, mad procession moved in great disorder out into the highway, where Garde had paused, dismayed and concerned for Goody. She saw the wise old woman walking calmly along with her captors, for Goody, unlike the witches of lesser wisdom, knew too much to cry out wild protests against this infamy, and so to convict herself of uttering curses, spells and blasphemies on the public roads. She looked about her, at men and women she had relieved of pains, and at children whose early ailments she had exorcised with her simples.

They were all now possessed of the devil, in good faith, for the mad capers they cut to show that Goody was all potent to produce the most fiendish and heinous results upon them could only have been invented out of the sheer deviltry which is one of the component parts of the human animal.

Helpless, terrified by these maniacs about her, Garde could only lean against the fence and hold her place while the running, neck-twisting people went by.

"Oh, poor dear Goody," she murmured to herself, involuntarily.

The old wise woman looked across the bank of bobbing heads about her and half smiled, in a weary, hopeless manner that sent a pang straight to Garde's heart. She knew that Goody was saying, "Never mind me, dear," and this only made it all the more unendurable.

Goody had been hustled by in a moment. The dust arose from the scurrying feet. The hobble-de-hoy pageant went rapidly toward the town, its numbers being momentarily augmented, as fresh persons heard the

disturbance rising and coming near, on the summer air, and joined the throng.

Unwilling to let her friend be conveyed thus away without her even knowing where she was now to be taken, Garde followed the last of the stragglers, and so saw the crowd become a mob, in the more populous streets of the town, and finally beheld Goody hurried to one of the prisons and shut out of sight behind the doors.

The jail was the one into which, six years before, Adam Rust had been so infamously thrown.

CHAPTER XIV.

GARDE'S SUBTERFUGE.

NEARLY as strong and well as ever, Adam Rust heard Garde's excited and desperate tale of Goody's capture with an indignation which far outran her own. He failed to realize, at first, the full import of Goody's position. Then, as Garde made him understand the almost inevitable execution, staring this old woman-friend in the face, at the end of a trial from which Truth would fly moaning, with her hands to her ears, the rover would have buckled on his sword and gone to batter down the jail to set the old wise-woman free, had his sweetheart not restrained him with all her powers of dissuasion.

"Oh, we have got to be far more clever than that," she said. "We have got to get her out of there quietly—so quietly that we can get her away—a long way off, before the awful crowds shall find it out. Help me to do this. Help me to get her out cunningly, or we shall fail—and to-night it will all be too late."

"Couldn't the Governor pardon her out?" said Adam. "Why has he gone away at such a time? Here, couldn't Mrs. Phipps write a pardon? We could take it to the jailer, and try him. If he then refused to release our friend, we could try with a little gold in his hand. Mrs. Phipps—Mrs. Phipps," he called to the Captain's wife.

The plump little woman would have done anything on earth for Adam—her boy—and for Garde, whom she loved no less, but she shook her head at this new proposal. The potentialities of the position in which William's sudden elevation had placed her still gave her a little fright to contemplate. She knew nothing of the powers of a Governor, still less of those of a Governor's wife.

“I would be glad to do this thing, dear Adam,” she said, “for your sake, or Garde's, or even for old Goody herself, but can I? Would I dare? I fear you hardly know the temper of these people on this question of witches. They are mad.”

“Try it,” said Adam. “We can do no less than to give it a trial. The jailer will know of no reason for limiting the Governor's prerogatives, nor even those of his good wife. Write what I shall dictate, and let us make the attempt. A bit of boldness is often as good as an army.”

Never able to resist when Adam begged or even suggested, Goodwife Phipps wrote, as he directed, one of the most sweeping and imperious pardons ever reduced to cold language. This being duly sanded, and approved, Rust folded it up and placed it safely in his pocket.

“Now then, John Rosella,” he said to Garde, who blushed prettily, in spite of her many conflicting emotions, “even supposing this works its charm, we have only then made a good beginning. I must have a horse on which to convey old Goody out of the reach of harm, when they find she has slipped between their fingers. And the horse must be my own. No more

borrowed horses will do for me. Therefore content your mind, sweetheart, while I go forth to make my needed purchases."

He kissed her, while Goodwife Phipps bustled off importantly about her duties, and reassuring her that all should yet be well for Goody, he went out into the glorious sunlight, and felt his old-time vigor spring forward—from the warmth and the joyousness of Nature—to meet him.

But the matter of finding a horse in Boston was not one to be disposed of lightly. He hunted far and wide, for of those which were offered for sale, many were old, a few were lame and others were vicious. These latter he would have liked, for himself, since they challenged him, their spirit against his, but foregoing the pleasant anticipation of a battle royal, he rejected offers right and left, until he had used up the morning completely, and at length felt obliged to be satisfied with a somewhat undersized bay, who nevertheless seemed strong and otherwise fit for the business in hand.

Garde in the meantime had grown nervous with impatience, afraid as she was, of one of those swift, inhuman trials of Goody which so often were the subterfuges of the fanatics for rushing a person precondemned, to the death from which there was no escape.

"I have thought the matter over calmly," said Adam, who knew nothing of real calmness in a moment of daring, "and I feel certain we shall double our chances of success by waiting till dark, or near it, when the jailer might be persuaded to think we could get her away un-

noticed by the rabble, and so might consent to the plan, when otherwise he would think he must refuse.

There was reason in this, as Garde could see. Making Adam promise to take a rest, before the time should be ripe for their enterprise, she went home to David Donner, to set things to rights, and otherwise to keep abreast of her little housewifely duties. She found the old man excited, by a call which had come for his services, at noon.

One of the seven magistrates who sat in the court of Oyer and Terminer, to try the witches, had fallen ill. David had been requested to assume his place. At this wholly unexpected news, Garde felt her heart leap with a sudden rejoicing. If the worst came, Goody would have at least one friend at the trial, to whose words of wisdom the Council had so frequently listened. She ran to the old man and gave him a kiss.

"Oh, I am so glad, dear Grandther," she said. "They know how wise you are and just!"

"Thankee, child, thankee," said the white-haired old man, smiling with the pleasure which the whole transaction had excited in his hungering breast. "They recognize me—a little—at last."

Yet so eager had the girl become, and so frightened of what the results were almost certain to be, if Goody ever came to her trial, during the absence of Governor Phipps, that she and Adam were hastening off to the jail the moment the twilight began to descend on the town.

"Jailer Weaver owes me some little favor," she said as they came to the place, "and he really owes a great

deal to Goody." Her voice was shaking, her teeth felt inclined to chatter, so excited was all this business making her feel.

Vivid recollections of those terrible moments in which she had come to see Mrs. Weaver and then had hovered about the prison, to liberate Adam, made her cling to his arm in terror of what they were now about to attempt.

Adam himself, wondering if the jailer would by any chance remember his face, and the break he and the poor old beef-eaters had made, had the boldness and the love of adventure come surging up in his heart, till he petted the hilt of his sword with a clenching fist.

They entered at the door of that portion of the prison building where the Weavers made their residence, as this would excite no suspicion on the part of the few pedestrians in the street. The nature of their business being partially secret, they chose to interview the jailer in the room which answered for his parlor.

Weaver was a man who constantly raised and lowered his eyebrows—a habit he had gained through years of alternately scowling at his guests and then looking puzzled or surprised that, being so innocent as they always were, they should still be brought to such a place. He listened to Adam's flowery and courtly address, in which he announced the advent of Goody's pardon, with at least a hundred of these eyebrow contortions.

"But the Governor never pardons before a trial," he said. "Else, how should he know but what he

was pardoning a very guilty person indeed ? If he had pardoned her, or if he will pardon her, after the trial, I shall be glad to give her freedom, poor soul. But you see she hasn't even been tried, and moreover this pardon comes from the Governor's good lady."

Garde's heart sank. The man was so unanswerably logical.

"But, my good man," said Adam, "I tell you this would be the Governor's pleasure. And the Governor stands in the shoes of the King, in matters of grave importance. Now call in any one and ask if I am not the Governor's friend—his secretary, indeed."

"I know your face," said Weaver, who remembered Adam well enough, as a former guest of the house, but who chose to say nothing on delicate subjects. "I saw you with Sir William the day he landed. Oh, aye, you are his friend, I know that well. But——"

"Good !" Adam interrupted. "Then, the Governor—who stands, mind you, in the King's shoes, in this matter, is away. I, being his friend, for the moment take his place. Therefore I stand in the King's shoes myself, and I desire this woman's pardon ! Bring forth your ink, and I shall add my signature to the document, in the King's name."

Weaver was bewildered. This reasoning was as clear as a bell, yet he knew what the angry mobs would soon be demanding from his stronghold.

"But—but there can be no pardon, as I said, till after trial," he stammered.

"What !" said Rust striding back and forth, while Garde looked on and trembled, "do you refuse to obey your King ?"

“ Oh, sir, alas, no,” said the jailer. “ But what can I do ? ”

“ Do ? Do ? My friend, do you value your daily bread ? Do you wish to retain your office ? Or shall the Governor grant your dismissal ? ”

This was touching the man on a spot where he could endure no pressure. He quailed, for he found himself between the devil—as represented by the fanatical spirit of the mob—and the deep sea into which the loss of his place would plunge him at once.

“ Oh, don’t turn me out ! ” he begged, convinced well enough of Adam’s power with the Governor. “ I would do anything to please you, sir, and I have done much already to please the Governor. I am an old man, sir, and we have saved nothing, and we know no other trade, and many people hate us. There would be no place for me and mine. Do not turn us away for this.”

“ I don’t wish to turn you away,” said Adam. “ I merely ask you to release this woman.”

“ She has never done any harm,” put in Garde. “ She has been very good to your wife and you. Surely you could spare her this.”

“ I would, Miss, I would,” said the wretched man. “ I am sick to death of this terrible craze of witches, but what can I do ? If I do not release her, I shall lose my place and starve. If I do let her go, I shall have all the mobs down upon me, when they find there is no witch for trial. How can I show them a paper, instead of a prisoner ? My life might pay the forfeit.”

"Oh, Adam, this is terrible," said Garde. "What can we do?"

"After trial, you can surely get her pardoned," the man insisted. "You have the power. You can save her then."

"Oh, they will never wait!" cried the girl. "They may try her to-night, and find her guilty and hang her the first thing in the morning!"

Weaver turned pale. He knew that what she said might in all probability be true.

"But I cannot give them a bit of paper instead of a prisoner," he repeated. "If you will bring me some one else, who will vouch for the mob's respect of your pardon, as you vouch for the Governor——"

"We've got to have her," interrupted Adam. "You can say she escaped, by her power of witchcraft. Release her, or look your last on these cheerful walls."

"Oh, but, Adam," said Garde, "why should we make such misery and trouble for one person—for two persons, indeed with Mrs. Weaver—in trying to save another? I like these good people. They are very kind to their prisoners. They have spent much of their own money to give them little comforts. Can we not think of some other way, as good as this, to get poor Goody out and do no harm to innocent people?"

Weaver was ready to break into tears. He started to repeat, "Bring me some one to——"

"Oh! Oh, I know! I know what to do!" cried Garde, interrupting. "All you need is some one else to blame, when they find she is gone! It would never be your fault if some one took her place. It would be a trick on you, when they found it out. I'll take her

place. I'll take her place, because when they find out they are starting to try only me, they will have to laugh it off as a joke. And Grandther is one of the magistrates—appointed to-day—so they will have to let me go—and Goody will be far away, by then—and no one will get into trouble!"

"No one could blame me—nor they wouldn't," said Weaver, slowly, "but as for you, Miss——"

"Then we can do it!" Garde broke in, a little wildly. "Oh, hurry! we might be too late. You can put me wherever Goody is, and I can change clothes with her, and then, Adam——"

"Yes, but——" started Adam.

"Oh, let me, dear. I shan't mind it a bit. And in the morning it will all be over, and Goody will be safe, and no one harmed—and there is no other way. And I want to! Oh, Goody has been like a mother to me! I must do it. Please don't say anything more. Mr. Weaver, take me to Goody now!"

"You brave little woman!" said Adam, his own courage leaping to greet this intrepid spirit in his sweetheart. "I believe you can do it! We shall win!"

"Come back as early as you can," said Garde, on whom a thought of the lonely part of the business was suddenly impressed. "It won't seem long. And when it is over, I shall feel so glad I could do a little thing for Goody. We must hurry. Every moment may be precious!"

"But, lassie——" the jailer tried to insist once more, "you——"

"Please don't talk any more," said Garde. "Take

me to her now. And when somebody looking like me comes back, let her go out by Mrs. Weaver's door with Mr. Rust."

"Yes, I, but——"

"In the King's name, no more talk," interrupted Adam. Then he turned to Garde. "You won't be timid, little mate?" he said. "I shall not be gone past midnight at the most."

"I shall be so glad to think I am leaving Goody in your strong, dear hands," said Garde, with a smile of love in her eyes. "Good-by, dear,—good night, till the morning."

She kissed him, and smiling at him bravely, followed the jailer, who saw that his place in the jail depended now on compliance with Adam's and Garde's demand. The tremulous pressure of her little hand in his remained with Adam when she had gone. He wondered if he were doing well, thus to let his sweetheart assume poor Goody's place. Then his own boldness of spirit rebuked him and he laughed at the imaginary scene of the magistrates, when they should finally discover their trial to be nothing but a farce.

Weaver meantime took a candle in his hand and led the way down the corridor of the prison. Garde hesitated when she saw him descending the steps.

"Why—where is she?" she asked, timidly.

"In the dungeon, lass," said the jailer. "I was over sorry, but it could not be helped. We are full everywhere else. But I shall leave you the light, and anything you like for comfort. Only, if you hear any one coming, blow out the candle straightway, or I shall be in a peck of troubles."

Quelling her sense of terror, and thinking of Goody, alone in that darkness, with such dreadful fates awaiting her reappearance among the people, she promised herself again it would soon be over, and so followed resolutely down into the hole where Adam had once been locked, in those long-past days of despair.

CHAPTER XV.

THE MIDNIGHT TRIAL.

GOODY DUNE was a frightened and pitiable spectacle, with her age and the terrors of the dungeon and coming execution upon her. She struggled in an effort to maintain a show of composure, at sight of Garde and the jailer. Nevertheless she would not, at first, listen to a word of the plan of substitution, to get her away from the prison.

When at last she had fairly overridden Goody's objections, and had made her complete the exchange of garments, Garde kissed her with all the affection of a daughter, and sent her forth to Adam's protection. She then heard the lock in the dungeon-door shoot squeakingly into place with a little thrill of fear, which nothing human and womanly could have escaped.

She listened to the footfalls receding down the corridor, and then the utter silence of the place began to make itself ring in her ears. She looked about her, by the aid of the flickering light which the tallow dip was furnishing, at the barren walls, the shadows, and the heap of straw in the corner. At all this she gave a little shiver of dread.

All the excitement which had buoyed her up to make this moment possible escaped from her rapidly.

She began to think how Goody must have felt, till her moment of deliverance came. Then she thought of what Adam had endured when, lame, hungry, exhausted and defamed, he had been thrown with violence into this horrible hole, from which he could have had no thought of being rescued.

She took the candle in hand and went in search of the tiny window, down through which she had dropped him the keys. When she saw it, she gave a little shudder, to note how small it was, and how it permitted no light to enter the place.

Returning then to a paper, filled with bread and butter, pie, cake and cold meat, which Weaver had fetched her, while she and Goody had been exchanging garments, she tried to eat a little, to occupy her time and her thoughts. But she could only take a sip of the milk, which stood beside the paper, and a nibble at the bread. To eat, while in her present state of mind, was out of the question.

The stillness seemed to increase. She felt little creeps of chill running down her shoulders. What a terrible thing it would be to have no hope of leaving this fearful cellar! Suppose anything should happen to Adam, to prevent him from returning! How long would it be till morning? Surely she must have been there nearly an hour already. She clasped her hands, that were cold as ice. She almost wished she had not tried this solution of the difficulty. Then she remembered the wise old woman, who had made her neighbors' children her own care—as she had no sons nor daughters of her own—and who had been sister, mother and friend to Hester Hodder, and guardian

angel, teacher and kindly spirit over herself. This made her calmer, for a time, and again courageous.

When once more the dread of the place and the ringing silence and the doubts that seemed to lurk in the shadows, came stealing back, she thought of Adam, rehearsing every incident in every time they had ever met. And thus she lingered long over that walk from Plymouth to Boston.

In the midst of sweet reveries which really did much to dissipate her qualms and chills, she heard someone walking heavily along in the corridor above her. Swiftly calling to mind what the jailer had said about the light, she blew it out and stood trembling with nervousness, waiting for the door to open before her.

But the sounds of heavy boots on the upper floor presently halted. Then they retreated. She breathed more freely. And then—she suddenly felt the darkness all about her.

Fear that some one had been about to enter had, for the moment, made her oblivious of the curtain of gloom which closed in so thickly when she blew out the candle. Now, when she realized that she could not again ignite that wick, a horror spread through her, till she closed her eyes and sank on the floor in despair.

The time that passed was interminable. She had not thought of how terrible the dungeon would be without the candle. She could almost have screamed, thus to be so deprived of the kindly light which had made the place comparatively cheerful. But she pulled up her resolution once again, thinking how

Goody and Adam had endured nothing but darkness, and with no hope of succor such as she could see illuminating her hours of dread.

Midnight came at last and found Garde unstrung. When the tramp of many feet rang above her, at last, she welcomed the thought that some one was near. She hoped it was morning and that Adam had returned. But then she heard a jangle of keys, and footfalls on the steps leading down to where she was, and her heart stood still.

In the natural consternation which the hour, the darkness and the suspense had brought upon her, she hastily hid her head and face in Goody's shawl, and bending over, to represent the older woman, she tremblingly saw the door swing open and heard the jailer command her to come forth.

With her heart beating violently and her knees quaking beneath her, Garde came out, relieved in some ways to flee from that awful hole of darkness, but frightened, when she saw the array of stern-faced men, who had come, as she instantly comprehended, to take her away to a trial.

There was not one among the five or six men that she knew. She remembered the faces of Pinchbecker and Higglar, having seen them in the morning, when Goody was taken, but the others were witnesses that Randolph had sent from Salem, experts in swearing away the lives of witches. They too had been present at the capture of Goody.

Undetected as she was, Garde was surrounded by this sinister group of men, and was marched away, out of the jail, into the sweet summer's night air, and

so down a deserted street, to a building she had never entered before in her life.

Hardly had the prison been left behind when Adam Rust, swiftly returning, after having readily provided for the safe escape of Goody Dune, came galloping into Boston, his brain on fire with a scheme of boldness.

He had made up his mind to ride straight to the prison, demand admittance, compel the jailer to deliver Garde up at once, carry her straight to a parson's, marry his sweetheart forthwith, and then take her off to New Amsterdam. Weaver could blame the rescue of the witch to him and be welcome. He could even permit Adam to tie him and gag him, to make the story more complete, but submit he should, or Rust would know the reason. His wild ride had begotten the scheme in his adventure-hungry mind.

He knew the residence of the parson who had married Henry Wainsworth and Prudence Soam, the week before he and Phipps had returned to Massachusetts, for Garde had told him all the particulars, time after time—having marriage in her own sweet thought, as indeed she should. He therefore went first to this parson's, knocked hotly on the door, to get him out of bed, and bade him be prepared to perform the ceremony within the hour.

The parson had readily agreed, being a man amenable to sense and to the luster of gold in the palm, wherefore Adam had gone swiftly off to work the *tour de force* on which all else depended. He arrived at the jail when Garde had been gone for fifteen minutes. Here he learned with amazement of the midnight trial to which she had been so summarily led.

Trembling like a leaf, Garde was conducted into a chamber adjoining the room wherein the dread magistrates were sitting, with their minds already convinced that this was a case so flagrant that to permit the witch to live through the night would be to impair the heavenly heritage of every soul in Boston.

Here the girl was left, in charge of Gallows and two other ruffianly brutes, whose immunity from the evil powers of witches had been thoroughly established in former cases. In the meantime her accusers had gone before the magistrates, ahead of herself, to relate the unspeakable things of which Goody Dune had been guilty.

Shaking, not daring to look up, nor to utter a sound, Garde had tried to summon the courage to throw off the whole disguise, laugh at her captors and declare who she was, but before she should arrive in the presence of Grandther Donner, who would protect her and verify her story, at least as to who she was, she could not possibly make the attempt.

Terribly wrought upon by the suspense of waiting to be summoned before that stern tribunal of injustice, Garde began to think of the anger which these unmirthful men might show, when she revealed the joke before their astounded eyes. She swayed, weakly, almost ready to swoon, so great became her alarm.

She could hear the high voices of Psalms Higgler and Isaiah Pinchbecker, penetrating through the door. They were giving their testimony, in which they had been so well coached by Edward Randolph, who was even now in there among the witnesses, disguised, and keeping as much as possible in the background.

The door presently opened and Garde was bidden to enter. Her heart pounded with tumultuous strokes in her breast. She could barely put one foot before the other. She caught at the door-frame to prop herself up as she entered the dimly-lighted, shadow-haunted room.

Then her gaze leaped swiftly up where the magistrates were sitting. She saw strangers only—men she knew in the town, but not David Donner. She felt she should faint, when one of the men turned about, and she recognized her grandfather, looking feverish, wild-eyed and hardly sane. This was why she had not known him sooner.

“Oh, Grandther!” she suddenly cried. “It’s I! It’s Garde! Oh, save me! Oh, take me home!”

She flung off Goody’s shawl, and darting forward ran to her grandfather’s side and threw her arms like a child about his neck, where she sobbed hysterically and laughed and begged him to take her away.

The court was smitten with astonishment from which no one could, for the moment, recover.

Randolph had pressed quickly forward. But he now retired again into the shadow.

“What’s this? What’s this?” demanded the chief of the magistrates, sternly. “What business is this? What does this mean? Where is——”

“Witchcraft! A young witch! Cheated! We are cheated! The young witch has cheated us of the old witch!” cried Pinchbecker, shrilly.

“My child! My child!” said David Donner. “This is no witch, fellow-magistrates and friends.”

“She has cheated us of the old witch!” repeated

Pinchbecker wildly. "She has daily consorted with a notorious witch. She has aided a witch to escape. She is a witch herself! We know them thus! She is a dangerous witch! She is a terrible young witch!"

"How comes this?" said the chief again, excitedly. His associates also demanded to know how this business came to be possible, and what was its meaning. The room was filled with the shrill cries of the men denouncing Garde more stridently than before, and with the exclamations of astonishment and shouts to know what had become of the witch they had come there to try.

During all this confusion, Garde was clinging to her grandfather and begging him to take her home.

"Have the girl stand forth," commanded the chief magistrate. "We must know how this business has happened."

Three of the men laid hold of Garde and took her from her wondering grandfather's side. She regained her composure by making a mighty effort.

"Goody Dune was no witch!" she cried. "You all know what a good, kind woman she has been among you for years—till this madness came upon us! She is a good woman—and I love her, for all she has done. She is not a witch—you know she is not a witch!"

The witnesses, who knew all the ways in which witches were to be detected, raised their voices at once, in protest.

"Order in the Court!" commanded the magistrate. "Young woman, have you connived to let this Goody Dune escape?"

"She was no witch!" repeated Garde, courageously now. "I knew you would try to send her to the gal-

lows. I knew she was fore-condemned ! I could do no less—and you men could have done no less, had you been less mad !”

“ Blasphemy !” cried Higglar. “ She is convicted out of her own mouth !”

“ When a witch is young,” cried Pinchbecker, “ she can work ten times more awful evils and arts !”

One of the magistrates spoke : “ No woman ever yet was beautiful and clever both at one time. If she be the one, she cannot be the other. This young woman, being both, is clearly a witch !”

“ She’s a witch—worse than the other !” screamed another of the witnesses. “ Condemn her ! Condemn her !”

“ Oh, Grandther,” cried Garde, “ take me away from these terrible men !”

Randolph now came sneaking forth, out of the shadow.

“ This is that same young woman,” he cried, “ who lost the colony its charter !”

“ The charter !” screamed David Donner, instantly a maniac. “ The charter ! She lost us the charter ! Witch ! The charter ! Condemn her ! Kill her ! The charter ! She ! She ! She ! Kill her !—Where is she ? The charter ! The charter ! The charter !”

With his two bony, palsied hands raised high above his head, like fearful talons, with his white hair awry over his brow, with his eyes blazing with maniacal fire, the old man had suddenly stood up and now he came staggering forward, screaming in a blood-chilling voice and making such an apparition of horror that the men fell backward from his path.

"Oh Grandther ! Grandther !" cried Garde, holding forth her arms and going toward him, to catch him as she saw him come stumbling toward her.

"Witch !" screamed the old man shrilly. "Kill her ! Kill her ! I never coerced her ! The charter ! Witch ! Witch ! The charter !"

He suddenly choked. He clutched at his heart in a wild, spasmodic manner, and with froth bursting from his lips, he fell headlong to the floor and was dead.

"She has killed him !" cried Higgler. "She has killed him with her hellish power !"

"Witch ! A murderous young witch !"

"Condemn her ! Condemn her !" came in a terrible chorus.

"To the gallows ! Hale her to the gallows !" Randolph added from the rear.

The man called Gallows thought this referred to him. He grinned. He and the two brutes who had handled many defenseless witches before, came toward the girl, who stood as if petrified, her hand pressed against her heart in dumb anguish.

Suddenly the door was thrown open and in there came Governor Phipps, cane in hand, periwig adjusted, cloak of office on his shoulders. He was blowing his nose as he entered, so that no one saw his face plainly, yet all knew the tall, commanding figure and the dress.

"What, a trial, at night, and without me ?" he roared, in a towering rage, which many present had already learned to fear. "Is this your province, you magistrates, assembled to deal out justice ? Do you heckle a defenseless woman like this ? Disperse !—the whole of you, instantly. I command it ! If you have

condemned, I pardon. The prisoner will leave the court with me!"

The men, craven that they were, he could deceive, but Garde knew the voice, the gait, the bearing of her lover. She sprang to his side with a little cry of gladness and clung to him wildly, as his strong arm swung boldly about her waist. She could hardly more than stand, so tremendous had been the stress of her fearful emotions.

Scorning to expend further scolding or shaming upon them, and comprehending that delay had no part in his game, Adam turned his back on the slinking company and strode away, half supporting Garde, who hung so limply in his hold.

Randolph, baffled, afraid to reveal himself by denouncing the imposture which he had been only a second behind Garde in detecting, stole close to his henchmen and whispered the truth in their ears.

Higgler and Pinchbecker, conscious of the blood of Adam on their hands, felt their knees knock suddenly together. The man must be the very devil himself.

CHAPTER XVI.

THE GAUNTLET RUN.

WITH his bride up behind him on his horse, the rover spurred swiftly away from the parson's, still within the hour, in which he had promised to return to his wedding. Unafraid of whatsoever the world, before or behind, might contain, while her lover-husband lived at her side, Garde felt a sense of exhilaration, at leaving Boston, such as she had never known in all her life.

With her grandfather dead and Goody no longer at the little cottage on the skirts of town, she had no ties remaining, save those at the houses of Soam and Phipps. And what were these, when weighed in the balance against Adam Rust—her Adam,—her mighty lord?

Trembling and clinging as she was, he had carried her off. Gladly she had gone to the parson's. Her heart now rejoiced, as he told her that Massachusetts was behind them forever. For its people, with their harsh, mirthless lives of austerity and fanaticism, she had only love enough to give them her pity. But her life was life indeed, when, ever and anon, Adam halted the horse, lest she fear a fall, and twisted about to give her a kiss and a chuckle of love and to tell of the way he had cheated the mob and the court of their witches.

“Make no doubt of it, you are a witch—one of the sweetest, cleverest, bravest, most adorable little witches that ever lived,” he said, “and I love you and love you for it, my darling wife!”

They had left the town early in the morning. By break of day they were not so far from Boston as Adam could have wished. The horse had been wearied by carrying double, when he conveyed Goody Dune to a place of safety,—so that the old woman could subsequently join himself and Garde in New Amsterdam,—and therefore he had halted the animal humanely, from time to time, as the load under which the good beast was now working was not a trifle.

Having avoided the main road, for the greater part of the remaining hours of darkness, Adam deemed it safe at last to return to the highway, as he thought it unlikely they had been pursued under any circumstances. Thus the sun came up as they were quietly jogging along toward a copse of trees through which the road went winding with many an invitation of beauty to beckon them on.

Crossing a noisy little brook, the rover permitted the horse to stop for a drink. Not to be wasting the precious time, Adam turned himself half way around in the saddle, as he had done so frequently before, and gave his bride a fair morning salute.

He had then barely ridden the horse a rod from the stream, when, without the slightest warning, the figure of Gallows, mounted on a great black steed, suddenly broke from cover among the trees and bore down upon them.

The great hulk, sword in hand, made a quick dash

toward the defenceless two, and slashed at Garde with all his fearful might.

Jerking his horse nearly out of the road, Adam swung from the line of the brute's cowardly stroke, yet before he could do aught to prevent it, Gallows righted, flung out his leaden fist and dragged the girl fairly off from her seat, till she struck on the back of her head, among the rocks of the road, and lay there unconscious, and almost beneath the tread of the horse's prancing feet.

Then the monster spurred at his horse and turning him back, rode to drive him madly over the prostrate form in the dust.

Making a short, sharp cry of anger, Adam whipped out his sword and dashed upon the murderous butcher before he could get within fifteen feet of Garde, where she lay in the sunlight.

Gallows had plenty of time to see him coming. The two met in a tremendous collision of steel on steel that sounded a clangor through the woods and sent the two swords flying from their owners' grips.

Disarmed, the pair thudded together in a swift and hot embrace, sawing their horses close in, the more firmly and straight erect to hold their seats.

"You be a fool and I be the fool-killer!" roared Gallows, hoarsely. He tugged with his giant strength, to drag Adam fairly across to his own big saddle, where he could either break his back or beat him to death with the butt of a pistol, which he was trying to draw with the hand that held the reins.

Slipping his wrist under the chin and his hand around to the fellow's massive shoulder, Adam tilted

back the heavy head with a force so great that Gallows was glad to release his hold, else he would surely have toppled from his perch.

The horses leaped a little apart. Back their riders jerked them. Again the two big human forms shot together, and clung in a fierce embrace, like two massive chunks of iron, welded together by their impact. Once more Gallows used his great brute strength, while Rust employed his wit and got his same terrible leverage on the monster's neck.

For a moment Gallows fought to try to break the hold, and to drag his opponent headlong from his horse, by kicking Adam's animal stoutly in the flank. But Adam was inflicting such an agony upon him as he could not endure. They broke away, only to rush for the third time, back to this giant wrestling.

"The fool will never learn. I shall kill him yet!" cried Rust to himself, for he went for Gallows's neck as before and got it again in his hold.

He threw a tremendous strength into the struggle. Gallows let out a bellow. Releasing the reins, he threw both his arms about his foe and deliberately fell from his seat, with the intention of crushing Rust beneath his weight, on the ground.

Adam's turn in the air was the work of the expert wrestler. The horses shied nervously away.

The two were up on their feet and telescoped abruptly in one compact, struggling mass, as if two malleable statues of heroic size had suddenly been bent and intertwined together.

With his ox-like force Gallows began to force Adam backward. Adam let him expend himself in this

manner for a moment. He then discovered the great hulk's design. He meant to force the rover to where Garde was still lying, and so to trample upon her till the life should be stamped and ground from her helpless form.

Randolph had sent him to commit this final infamy.

The rage that leaped up in Adam's breast was a terrible thing. He fainted to drop as if in exhaustion. Gallows loosened his hold to snatch a better one, at once. In that second Adam dealt him a blow in the stomach that all but felled him where he stood.

Before he could straighten to recover, Rust was upon him like a tiger. Getting around the great brute's side, he threw both hands around the short, thick neck and twisted himself into position so that he and Gallows were placed nearly back to back. Then with one movement he lifted at the man's whole weight, with the monster's head as a lever, hauled fiercely backward. Into the action he threw such a mighty rush of strength that Gallows was hoisted bodily off the ground, for a second, and then his neck gave forth a tremendous snap and was broken so fearfully that one of the jagged ends of a vertebra stabbed outward through the flesh, and dripped with red.

The whole dead weight of the fellow's carcass rested for a second on Rust's back and shoulder, and then Adam let him fall to the ground, where, like a slain hog, he rolled heavily over and moved no more.

Panting, fierce-eyed, ready to slay him again, Adam stood above the body for a moment, his jaws set, his fists clenched hard in the rage still upon him.

Then he heard a little moan, and turning about saw

Garde, attempting to raise herself upward, in the road. He ran to her instantly and propped her up on his knee.

"Dearest, dearest," he said, "are you badly hurt? Garde, let me help you. Don't look—don't look there. It's all right. Here, let me get you back to the shade."

He took her up tenderly in his arms and carried her out of the road to a near-by bank of moss. Here he sat her down, with her back to a tree, and ran to fill his hat with water from the stream.

The two horses, having stopped to take a supplementary drink, and a nibble at the grass, were easily caught. The rover secured them both and tied them quickly to a bush, with the dragging reins. Then back to Garde he ran with the water.

"Oh, thank you, dear," she said, "I don't think I am hurt. But with the fright, and the fall, I think I must have fainted."

"Thank God!" said Adam, as she drank from his hat and smiled in his face, a little faintly, but with an infinite love in her two brown eyes. "Thank God, for this delivery. There will be no more trouble. I feel it! I know it. At last we have run the gauntlet."

CHAPTER XVII.

BEWITCHED.

IN his tidy little house in New Amsterdam, Adam sat reading a letter from Governor William Phipps, written at Boston.

“I forgyve you y^r merrie empersonashun and all ye other things alsoe, save y^e going away without goode-bye,” he read, “but let it pass. I w^d write to say God Blesse you bothe. And as I have never known such a goode blade as y^{rs} in fight, I w^d offer you to make you my commander of ye forces to goe in war against ye French, where they do threat to harasse our peeple as of yore——”

Adam halted here and looked up at the battered old sword on the wall. His thought went truant, to his helpmate, away for a few minutes’ walk to Goody Dune’s. He shook his head at the Governor’s generous offer.

“Well, well, William,” he said aloud, “I don’t know. I don’t know what may be the matter, but—no more fighting for me, old comrade. I think it must be that I—am bewitched.”

THE END.

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